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INTRODUCTION.



Apostolic Delegation.

WASHINGTON, D. C.,
September 22, 1905.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR :

I am glad to learn that, notwithstanding your incessant literary labors, you are about to publish a *Manual of Church Music*, composed in accordance with the rules and spirit prescribed by our Holy Father, Pius the Tenth, in his *Motu proprio* of November 22, 1903.

I consider the publication of such a manual most opportune at the present time, and I have no doubt that it will prove of paramount importance in the solution of those difficulties, which, in the mind of many, hamper the putting into execution of the Papal instructions.

The names of your co-operators, who are esteemed as some of the ablest choirmasters of America and Europe, are a suffi-

cient guarantee for the soundness of the principles you sustain, and consequently the *Manual* cannot but recommend itself and have every assurance of success.

Unfortunately the edict of our Sovereign Pontiff has been received by many in this country with misgivings as to the possibility of putting it into practice. I trust that this timidity will be overcome by the help of your *Manual* and by the encouragement given by the happy results already obtained in those churches where the Reverend Pastors, in obedience to the Pope's orders, have courageously undertaken the desired reform, guided by methods more or less similar to the one you advocate in your book.

Indeed, it is to be deplored that in a country like this, where so much zeal is shown in promoting whatsoever tends to enhance the dignity, majesty, and sanctity of our Sacred Mysteries, any hesitation should exist in endeavoring to bring about such a necessary reform in church music. And the more so because if the Gregorian Chant may appear in some places difficult of execution, the same cannot be said of modern church music which is also permitted. For, whilst our Holy Father in the said *Motu proprio* regards Gregorian Chant as the only chant which possesses in the highest degree the qualities proper to the Sacred Liturgy, yet, taking into consideration the progress which the art of music has made, admits also in the Church modern music, provided that it be sober and grave, containing nothing profane and in no way unworthy of the liturgical functions.

Such being the case, what is the cause of the deplorable hesitation we witness in the banishment of profane music from our churches? I am led to believe that the cause of this procrastination is to be found in the fact that our taste has been vitiated and our judgment led astray by the constant use, from our earliest years, of sensational profane music, and

consequently we do not now fully realize the value of ecclesiastical music, than which nothing in connection with the Sacred Liturgy is more sublime and beautiful.

Yet this is a matter of the gravest importance and deserves our serious consideration.

Here we have the command of the Supreme Pastor of the Church, emphatically given and binding in conscience bishops, priests, and people. The edict does not intend to introduce an innovation in the Church, but merely aims at the restoration of an ancient discipline, which is essential to the decorum and splendor of the Church of God.

On the necessity of this reformation of church music the highest ecclesiastical authorities of every age and country, in accordance with the wishes of the Sovereign Pontiffs, have never ceased to insist. Even here in America, the Fathers of the Third Council of Baltimore proclaimed as an abuse any other music during the celebration of sacred functions and the solemn oblation of the Sacrifice of the Mass, except such as would "more efficaciously raise the hearts of men to God and thereby add greater glory to His worship."

Yet, notwithstanding all this anxious care on the part of the authorities of the Church and the last fervent appeal of His Holiness Pius the Tenth, as yet, comparatively speaking, very few are the pastors who have earnestly set themselves to work to correct a practice so vigorously condemned as derogatory to the sanctity of the House of God. What is the cause of this aberration? It is said that it is difficult to follow out our Holy Father's instructions. But such is not the case, because, once admitted that, besides Gregorian Chant which to some appears hard and difficult, modern music, provided it be in harmony with the sanctity of the Sacred Liturgy, is also permitted, all difficulties are removed; for the execution of church music is far easier than that of the intricate

passages of some compositions which to-day profane our churches.

It is also argued that the exclusion of women from the choir would prove detrimental to our church services. It is true that this regulation will encounter difficulties, especially in small parishes and in country places, until school-boys can be properly trained; and consequently in exceptional cases the matter is left to the prudence and zeal of the bishops and pastors. Here too, however, measures should be taken so that the laws of the Church be complied with *quamprimum*. As regards large parishes and cathedrals, this regulation cannot encounter grave difficulties. What has already been accomplished since the publication of the *Motu proprio* in some of our American cathedrals and churches, can be accomplished in others if the pastors will only manifest sufficient zeal and set themselves to work with earnestness and perseverance for this much needed reform. Women singers could still be of great service in the church. They could play a better and nobler part: they could act as leaders in congregational singing, which should be introduced in every church.

Again, we are told that the introduction of such a reform would lessen the number of worshippers. But facts prove the contrary. The churches where pure ecclesiastical music has been introduced are more frequented than others. But admitted that such a falling off in attendance should be feared, would it not be much better for such lovers of sensational music to remain out of the House of God, which is the House of Prayer, than to profane it by their presence? However, it is a pleasure to know that the vast majority of the laity, tired of the morbid and sensational singing in our churches, is anxious to see the injunctions of the Holy See carried into execution. I have received not a few complaints from some of the most distinguished members of the laity protesting

against this flagrant violation of the laws of the Church and against the profanation of the House of God by unbecoming music. It behooves pastors to whom the care of souls is entrusted and who have to look for their edification, to see that such scandals are removed. The Instruction of our Holy Father Pius the Tenth is clear and evident. It is directed to the whole Catholic world. No nation is exempted; and it has a juridical and authoritative binding character everywhere and upon all Catholics. "We will," says the Holy Father, "with the fulness of our Apostolic authority that the force of law be given [to the said *Motu proprio*], and we do by our present handwriting impose its scrupulous observance on all."

After this formal declaration issued about two years ago, what would one be led to think of some pastors who have not as yet made a single move toward the desired reform; who even forget their sacred mission to such an extent as to permit, in open disregard of every Church discipline, the printing of pompous programmes of objectionable music with the names of the soloists, etc., as is practised in theatres and concert halls, and the distribution of the same during the celebration of our most august Mysteries? A parish priest who permits such abominations in the House of God, or who has not the power or courage to put a stop to such sacriligious abuses, is unworthy of his high and sacred office.

Reverend Sir, I heartily bless your work the object of which is to eradicate these evils. May it have a large circulation and be crowned with success.

With sentiments of the highest esteem, I beg to remain
Most faithfully Yours in Xto.,

+ *Giuseppe Falconio* *Arch. of Louisa*
Apostolic Delegate.

THE REVEREND HERMAN J. HEUSER, D. D.

PREFACE.

THE Instruction on Sacred Music, commonly referred to as the *Motu proprio* on the subject, was issued at the Vatican on the Feast of St. Cecilia, patroness of Church Music, November 22, 1903.

That a subject which had already been treated copiously by the immediate predecessor of Pius X should have been one of the very first to be taken up by the recently elected Pontiff, has been widely commented upon as well by our separated brethren as by those of the household of the faith. It was thought that Leo XIII and Pius IX, in their various pronouncements on the well-worn theme, had uttered fully the mind of the Holy See; and the world at large was looking for some startling declaration on topics of ecclesiastical and state polity, which should either re-affirm or contradict the policies of the great Leo. The feeling of surprise was perhaps natural in the circumstances; and yet the declared desire of Pius X to "restore all things in Christ" should have led a wise observer, familiar with the legislation on liturgical music and its failure to attain the desired results, to suspect that the new Pontiff must at some time rehearse the old, old story. That the rehearsal should have come so soon is to be interpreted as a papal view of the really extreme importance of the issues at stake.

The peculiar emphasis thus laid on the subject of liturgical music was not misunderstood; and it is not strange that a large discussion should have followed the pronouncement. But this fact will not explain the really vast interest created;

the widespread activities that immediately followed; and the various voices of protest mingled with those of praise, as well as the commentary of misapprehension or misinterpretation mixed with that of elucidation, which signalized the widespread discussion of the papal *Instruction*.

The real reason for all this lies, not in the novelty of the Pope's action, but in its juridical and authoritative and binding character. Leo XIII had earnestly and insistently *recommended* certain reforms. Pius X has *commanded* reform: "We do therefore publish, *motu proprio* and with certain knowledge, our present *Instruction*, to which, as to a juridical code of sacred music (*quasi a codice giuridico della musica sacra*), we will, with the fulness of our Apostolic authority, that the force of law be given, and we do by our present handwriting impose its scrupulous observance on all." ¹

These are very strong words, even for a command. But since every law must rely upon executive activity for its enforcement, the Pope concludes his *Instruction* with words of almost pathetic exhortation to all concerned: "Finally, it is recommended to choir-masters, singers, members of the clergy, superiors of seminaries, ecclesiastical institutions, and religious communities, parish priests and rectors of churches, canons of collegiate churches and cathedrals, and, above all, to the diocesan Ordinaries, to favor with all zeal these prudent reforms, long desired and demanded with united voice by all; so that the authority of the Church, which herself has repeatedly proposed them, and now inculcates them, may not fall into contempt." ²

These words of entreaty appealed to the hearts of all concerned, just as the preceding words of command had appealed to their consciences; and forthwith the literature of the newly inaugurated movement for reform in church music sprang

¹ See *The Ecclesiastical Review*, Feb. 1904, p. 115.

² *Ibid.*, p. 123.

into being and was marvelously multiplied. But, as was perhaps inevitable, various minds interpreted differently certain parts of the *Instruction*, sometimes as to the exact meaning of the paragraphs, sometimes as to the binding character of the particular portion of the legislation thus treated of. Again, to some priests and to some choir-masters the difficulties to be surmounted appeared so formidable as to justify a dilatory compliance, an attitude of prudent hesitation while the matter of "ways and means" might be more maturely considered.

To the simple-hearted seeker for clear information and definite lines of procedure in the carrying out of the Pope's command, the wide discussion must indeed have darkened counsel. In some cases the discussion appeared to be of a minimizing character; in others, of an undoubtedly obstructive purport. Technical language, appeals to tradition, æstheticism mixed with archæology, the scarcely veiled antipathies of schools of interpretation in Plain Chant, questions concerning the possible employment of female voices in extra-liturgical functions, etc., etc.,—all these distracting features were found in a discussion which, meanwhile, was not carried on consistently in one quasi-authoritative organ where the literature of the subject, however involved, might at least be easily read and compared, but was spread out over months of time and in a large variety of periodicals—quarterly reviews, monthly magazines, weekly and daily papers, in all the languages of Christendom; so that even an earnest student might easily become so perplexed as to give the subject up in despair of ever understanding it.

Meanwhile, the curious fact remains that the subject is, in itself, by no means difficult to understand, if treated with discrimination by competent students of liturgy and of music. Let the whole subject be gone over patiently by those qualified

for such a task by knowledge and experience, and what seemed a hopelessly confused mixture of chemical elements in constant ebullition will be found solidified into a beautiful and shapely crystal—clear, definite, compact. This is what has been achieved by the writers of the present *MANUAL OF CHURCH MUSIC*. All the subjects touched upon by the *Instruction* have been carefully gone over by experts in liturgy, in music, in practical technique of choir-training. The volume is not merely a symposium of views and of articles; it is a consistent structure, each of whose parts is related organically to the others. The writers have not worked separately at their several themes, but have brought their combined expert knowledge, in their various fields of study and of practical experience, to bear upon the problems presented by the *Instruction*; so that each chapter represents a problem solved adequately, not by one of the editors but by all acting in conjunction.

A perusal of the volume will show the value of the method pursued. The end constantly kept in view is an eminently practical one. There is nothing merely academic in the treatment. Principles have indeed been set forth with sufficient elaboration, but the theory has been developed only so far as to make the practice more easily intelligible and feasible. Every priest, every choir-master, every singer—in a word, all those to whose spirit of zeal the Pope appeals in the last words of his famous *Instruction*—should not merely possess the volume but should carefully master the contents, so that all may be enabled to forward the “prudent reforms, long desired and demanded with united voice by all,” and so that “the authority of the Church, which herself has repeatedly proposed them, and now inculcates them, may not fall into contempt.”

H. T. HENRY.

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PART I.

THE ORGANIZATION OF LITURGICAL CHOIRS.

CHAPTER I.

THE CALL FOR REFORM IN CHURCH MUSIC.

THE question of our Church music has become within the last year an absorbing topic for discussion. Since the publication of the *Motu proprio*, in November, 1903, there has been much interesting speculation among the priests and musicians as to the precise meaning of the document. "What does it all mean?" they ask. "Does the Encyclical really apply to this country? What is the tenor and scope of the new legislation? Are we held by it to dispense with the services of our female singers, and to venture into the unfamiliar mysteries of chancel choirs and Plain Chant? and, if so, how are we best going to effect the change?"

Such queries are heard every day, for there has been considerable doubt here as to the mind of the Holy Father. The clergy and musicians were ill-prepared to face an ordinance so subversive of the existing conditions, and from this point of view it was but natural to expect some hesitation and lack of enthusiastic response. Pastors have been so busily engaged here in their priestly work that their attention in many cases had been quite diverted from the importance of the musical portion of their services. The chief problem touching upon Church music which can be said heretofore to have interested pastors to any great extent, was how to keep the members of the choir in peaceful and amicable relations, and this serious, and often impossible, question once solved, their

consciences have been quite at peace; a stormy sea once calmed, they were glad to leave well enough alone. Hence this formidable set of decrees, which demands that more of their interest be directed to the music, has not met a cordial welcome everywhere. The loyalty displayed in dealing with the question, however, and the readiness to conform as soon as possible to requirements of the Encyclical so universally expressed, give assurance that the present endeavor to consider the practical problems of the situation is opportune.

The custom of employing "mixed" choirs to sing what have come to be called the "Standard Masses" by some strange incongruity and forgetfulness of the true ideals of ecclesiastical music, has so long prevailed among us, that it was only with difficulty that some were brought to see the purpose and advantages of this radical reform.

Some Catholics in this country have known no other than the "mixed" choir; and at the first suggestion, a church choir without female voices seems an anomaly and an impossibility; they are incredulous when told that boys—and young boys of twelve and thirteen years of age—can fill the place of the trained and experienced women singers whom the recent legislation of His Holiness has debarred from singing as a part of the official choir. It would be unreasonable to expect that such a state of mind could easily and immediately reconcile itself to a prospect of conditions that imply such a different point of view and such new standards. The Encyclical must seem strange and mystifying to those of us who have not yet realized how absolutely and completely the present state of our service-music contradicts every ideal and tradition of the Church.

The writer does not forget that there have been many earnest advocates here of the higher and truly ecclesiastical stand-

ard of Church music,—many whose souls have been wounded and whose aesthetic sense has been offended by the secularization and extravagance which characterize the general tendency of the music ordinarily performed at the liturgical services. There are many, it is true, who for years have been trying to excogitate practicable plans for restoring sacred music to its rightful place, whose obvious ambition has been to check the speed with which the usage of our days is receding from the majestic simplicity of the Catholic ritual-music. But these ardent enthusiasts for better conditions have been in the minority. It is almost impossible to avoid concluding, from the music sung in most of our churches, that the characteristic attitude of those who have had the direction of it has not been one of earnest solicitude for the highest and truest ideals of the Catholic tradition.

From this state of indifference His Holiness has awakened us. He has told the world, with the full weight of his apostolic authority, that music has an important place in the liturgy of the Church, and that it must be guarded and attended with the earnest care which is due any integral part of the sacred offices. He has defined with careful precision the criteria by which musical compositions shall be judged worthy or unworthy of performance within the sacred edifice. He has ordered banished forever from our churches all that detracts in any way from the solemnity of the divine services; he has published “with certain knowledge,” a number of canons in the form of a “juridical code of sacred music,” and he has imposed “its scrupulous observance upon all.”

These decrees call for a root-and-branch reform; they involve so complete a change from the former condition that those concerned have been puzzled as to just where to begin. But it is evident that the meaning of the legislation and prac-

licable ways for its observance in our somewhat difficult situation are gradually becoming clearer. Our clergy have shown so much good-will toward the wish of the Holy Father, that we could not remain long without finding some means of coping with the difficulties which at first sight seem to make impracticable a literal observance of the Encyclical. In many dioceses commissions have been appointed to draw up the plans best suited for carrying out the reforms in their various localities. Already signs of a movement in the right direction have appeared which, although they are only beginnings, indicate a growing appreciation of the principles to which the *Motu proprio* has so forcefully directed our attention, and give hope that in the near future, our Church music will be thoroughly purged of all the unbecoming features of the present-day style.

With the new light that has come, and with the Encyclical as a guide, it should not require much thought, if people will look fairly into the question, to see that there is a wide hiatus between the music performed in most of our churches and the holy end to which it should be consecrated. Reasonable contrasting of the established ideals of sacred music with the style of compositions and the method of producing them which have been in vogue here, must reveal in the end that it is but the rare exception to find any even slight proportion between them. We feel that this fact is becoming more generally appreciated.

CHAPTER II.

THE RECENT LEGISLATION CONCERNING THE PERSONNEL OF CHURCH CHOIRS.

THE crucial point of the present situation arises from some uncertainty as to the decree which requires the use of boys instead of women in the soprano and contralto parts. Perhaps the reason behind this legislation may not be so evident as the principle which demanded a purer style of ecclesiastical song. At any rate, there can scarcely be any doubt that it is a lack of understanding of the ideal here in question, and the timidity with which those concerned approach the difficulties involved in conforming to it, that are the greatest obstacles to the progress of the reform. One can hardly avoid the suspicion that there has been a good deal of interpreting, modifying and explaining away of this decree on the part of those who have never taken a copy of the Pope's letter and sat down before it to study out its meaning. The decree itself is so clear as to preclude any possibility of misinterpretation: "Whenever, then, it is desired to employ the acute voices of sopranos and contraltos, these parts must be taken by boys, according to the most ancient usage of the Church." The note that is struck in the concluding phrase, "according to the most ancient usage of the Church," is dominant throughout the Pope's decree. In a preceding canon he asserts that "with the exception of the melodies proper to the celebrant at the altar, and to the ministers, which must be always sung in

Gregorian chant and without the accompaniment of the organ, all the rest of the liturgical chant belongs to the *choir of levites*, and, therefore, singers in church, even when laymen, are really taking the place of the ecclesiastical choir. On the same principle it follows that singers in church have a real liturgical office, and that therefore women, as being incapable of exercising such office, cannot be admitted to form part of the choir."

Being Catholics, we are accustomed to the use of authority; we do not argue about it. And apart from the consideration of the *pros* and *cons* a decree of the Holy Father determines finally our course of action. But, as is always the case, there are valid reasons behind this authoritative pronouncement. The story of the development of ecclesiastical chant shows that from the very beginning there was a marked tendency to confine the music of the liturgical services to a selected body of male singers. In 320 the Council of Laodicea decreed, that "No one is to sing in the church but the canonical singers who mount the lectern and sing from the book." Leo the Great, in the next century, established a choir of men to chant the canonical hours, and later, we note the rise of *scholae cantorum* for the training of the boys and men who were selected to sing at the ecclesiastical functions. The fact that these singers bore the title of subdeacons is significant of the estimation in which their office was held. The words of, Mr. Edward Dickinson, perhaps the most eminent historian of worship music in this country, are to the point:¹ "It is certainly noteworthy," he says, "that the exclusion of the female voice which has obtained in the Catholic Church throughout the Middle Age, in the Eastern Church, in the German Protestant Church, and in the cathedral-service of the Anglican Church.

¹ *Music in the History of the Western Church*, p. 50.

was also enforced in the temple worship of Israel. The conviction has widely prevailed among the stricter custodians of religious ceremony, in all ages, that there is something sensuous and passionate (I use these words in their simpler original meaning) in the female voice—something at variance with the austerity of ideal which should prevail in the music of worship. Perhaps, also, the association of men and women in the sympathy of so emotional an office as that of song is felt to be prejudicial to the complete absorption of mind which the sacred function demands. Both these reasons have undoubtedly combined in so many historic epochs to keep all the offices of ministry in the House of God in the hands of the male sex. On the other hand, in the more sensuous cults of paganism, no such prohibition has existed.”

The principle which debars women from participating in the functions of the official choir, fits in with the whole liturgical economy of the Church. The male choir is the best fitted to accompany the liturgical offices, for there is a peculiarly religious timbre in the concert of the boys’ pure soprano and alto voices with the heavier voices of the men. The spiritual effects possible to such a chorus are quite impossible to a *chignon* choir. The charm of a boy’s *well-trained* voice singing at the Holy Sacrifice and at the other sacred services, is quite indescribable; its power is marvelous and mysterious; it seems to tell of holiness and simplicity. There is a plaintive sweetness about it that appeals to the souls of the worshipers, and helps them to realize the sacredness of their surroundings; it has power wonderfully to inspire a sense of the sublime beauty of the ritual and to call forth floods of unawakened religious sentiment. Some years ago Canon Oakeley was quoted in the Dublin Review as follows:

“There is something about the voices of boys which is pre-eminently suited to the true idea of Christian praise, whereas it is exceedingly difficult for singers of the other sex, especially when accustomed to professional exhibitions, to tone down their mode of execution to the ecclesiastical standard. It will be said, I know, that male singers who have passed from the age of boyhood are liable to the same serious defect. This I do not deny; but it is a great point to have even one-half of a choir free from it; while, if I be right in supposing that by the substitution of boys for females in the treble parts the whole choir would be gradually purified and Catholicized, there would be a remote tendency in such a change to give a more ecclesiastical character to the musical services in general.”

Travelers who have heard the boy-voice developed to its richest possibilities—as at Farm Street, Westminster Cathedral, Brompton Oratory, St. Paul’s Cathedral (Anglican), London, etc., agree unanimously that it is in every detail and quality thoroughly religious and ecclesiastical. And yet we meet people here who are strangely opposed to boy-choirs.¹ “Boys can do only mediocre work,” is their argument; but one never hears such an opinion from those who have listened to a *thoroughly-trained* boy-choir. It is a misfortune that some of the Catholic sanctuary choirs here have not been organized or directed on anything like a scientific basis. There has been a good deal of mediocre, if not inferior, work done at times, with the natural result of prejudicing people against the idea. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the effects which can be produced with properly taught choirs, and it is the earnest hope of those most interested in this renaissance of holy traditions and better principles of Church music, that

¹ “Boy-choir” has come to be used as a technical term designating a choir of boys and men.

those engaged in forming and directing these new choirs will make their work a demonstrative argument, to all who frequent their services, of the advantage of this reform.

It is sad to realize that we Catholics have let slip through our fingers the rich heritage of the purer traditions of worship music, and that on being summoned to readjust our customs to these traditions, we are driven to look outside the fold for assistance. The affectionate care which has been bestowed upon the music of other churches—especially by the directors of the choral services of the Anglican Church—has done much which will help us in confronting the difficulties of perfecting our own Church music. For it must be confessed that, with the exception of the Caecilien-Verein and the Solesmes School of Plain Chant, there are few institutions which have treasured up the traditions of the old Catholic centuries and perpetuated what may be called the classical music of the Church. And even these two schools just named, though they help us in repertory, as shall be seen in the proper place, give comparatively little assistance in the distinctive training of boys' voices, for reasons more or less obvious.

“It is very interesting, and no doubt very profitable to talk about the superiority of Gregorian and Palestrinesque music, and the unique fitness of the boy-choir for church purposes,” is a common objection in these days; “but how are we, here in America, a missionary country—where the Church is still in its brick-and-mortar stage, where we have been glad and grateful to furnish any kind of a respectable service—how can we *here and now* make a change which involves such difficulties and so many unpleasant issues?”

It is this practical view of the reform that is the stumbling-block to many priests who have expressed a ready willingness to enforce the decrees in their parishes. They are frightened

at the face-difficulties of the situation; and, as has already been said, the timidity with which they have been proceeding is largely responsible for the comparatively little progress made. That there are some difficulties in the way of an immediate compliance with the letter of the law, even the ultra-enthusiasts of the movement readily admit. But it must be stated, too, that for the average city church, the installation and maintaining of effective Gregorian chancel choirs is much easier of accomplishment than the present attitude of some of the clergy would indicate.

Whatever be the initial difficulty connected with the disbanding of the established mixed choirs, and the organization of the others, it should be remembered that the results are worth infinitely more. Loyalty to our Holy Father is at stake, as well as the decorum of the divine services.

It is the hope of the Editors that this brochure will in some way contribute to further a sympathetic discussion of the practical problems which the clergy and musicians are called upon to meet and solve in the present crisis.

CHAPTER III.

THE ORGANIZATION OF A CHOIR.

I.

THE musical equipment of the average city church is something like this: there is a good pipe-organ in the choir-loft, and an organist (frequently a woman) of fair talent and some musical erudition; the personnel of the choir includes a paid quartet, or at least some singers who receive reimbursement, and a chorus of men and women of the parish, who are usually willing and reliable. The musical library consists of a collection of the so-called "Standard Masses," and many figured musical settings of the most frequently recurring offices and anthems; Palestrina or the later composers of the strict contrapuntal school are but feebly represented upon its shelves, and anything like an equipment for Gregorian services is conspicuously wanting. The pastor may think, further, that there are but few boys in the parish who seem to be available for choir purposes. Finally the church is built most likely without a chancel, and the seating of a sanctuary-choir would be a difficult problem.

Most priests conduct their choral services with an outfit something like the one just outlined, and they are asking themselves questions like these: "In dismissing my mixed choir ¹

¹"Mixed choirs" is not used here, and throughout this book, in its technical but rather in its popular meaning, *i. e.*, a choir of men and women.

will I not be abandoning a sure means of conducting Solemn Mass and Vespers for a very uncertain means? What assurance have I that a sufficient number of boys and men can be secured, and that it will be possible to maintain a sanctuary choir for a number of years in this parish? Must the organ in the gallery be brought down and crowded into the apse?" These and such like are the questions that are demanding answers now and until they are answered, it is vain to hope for a general introduction of the reforms.

The subject that naturally is of paramount importance here concerns the material which is to make up these liturgical choirs. Boys and men must be secured who will prove efficient and reliable singers; and not only must provision be made for the first beginnings of a choir, but a plan must be predetermined upon for replenishing the choir with fresh voices.

II.

HOW TO ORGANIZE THE BOYS' SECTION.

First, then, as to the actual organization of the boys' section of the choir. Where can we get suitable choristers? The answer to this question is based upon two facts,—first, in the average city parish there is a parochial school or at least a Sunday-school of fair size; secondly, every boy between the ages of nine and fifteen, who has a musically correct ear, and sound vocal organs, is a possible chorister-boy.

Perhaps it is well to advert here to the fact that there is a very large area in the United States where, on account of the extreme paucity of the Catholic population, and the insufficiency of resources, the parochial school system has been but inchoately developed. Dioceses in this area can scarce reasonably be held to a literal compliance with the recent decrees.

But an examination of the conditions of the churches in the cities and towns of our flourishing dioceses reveals that it is quite possible, and in fact comparatively easy, for very many parishes to secure plenty of good choir material. The statistics of one diocese, picked at random from a number where the general conditions are about the same, will serve as an illustration. Taking the reports of the English-speaking parishes only, we find that in the four parishes of the diocesan seat, there are three schools, one including 129 boys, another 50, and the third 69. Four other towns make the following reports :

(a) 4 parishes; 3 schools of 92, 73, and 221 boys.

(b) 1 parish; a school of 130 boys.

(c) 2 parishes; 2 schools of 80 and 102 boys.

(d) 1 parish; a school of 168 boys.

Comparing these figures with the facts that almost every boy can be developed by assiduous and careful training into an acceptable singer, and that a choir of thirty boys is adequate for any of our churches, it becomes quite evident that, in the diocese just referred to, and in very many of which it is a type, the average parish can get a supply of boys' voices without much difficulty.

The parochial schools, and where these are wanting, the Sunday-schools, are the sources from which our choir-boys in most cases must be selected. In these, boys are ready at hand, and, with an occasional exception, in sufficient numbers to allow of careful discrimination in the choosing. Catholic boys are glad to sing in their churches, and rarely express any serious disinclination to the various functions and obligations which the office imposes upon them. The school undoubtedly will solve the problem of *where* to get boys for most priests; further argument about this is unnecessary. *What* boys to

accept, and *how* to judge of their efficiency and capability are questions that require more detailed consideration.

What, then, is the criterion of a boy's possibilities as a chorister? If a choirmaster must judge of a boy's availability by the *present* sweetness of his voice, and the *present* fluency of his solfa-ing, then, indeed, the question of organizing boy-choirs is effectually closed. If the ultimate criterion of a boy's suitability for choir purposes is the state in which his voice development is found to be upon examination; and if we are to proceed upon the principle of demanding a proof of results already attained, and of rejecting all applicants who do not show themselves ready for immediate service, then those who are urging the installation of these new choirs, here, and exerting themselves to point out the possibility of it, have associated themselves with a vain cause. But it is not so. The criterion of boys' usefulness in the choir is not quite so unreasonable. Were it so, a chorister boy must needs be found ready-made, with all such qualifications as perfect tonal production, actual musical training, experience, and the rest. And yet we venture to say that it has been a common enough idea among musicians (most probably not more than a vague, half-defined idea) that only such boys could be made effective members of the choir. Many have never realized that very often the prize material of a choir is made up of boys who upon their entrance examination displayed a minimum of capability. Choir-boys are *made*, not *born*. Every healthy boy who can follow the intervals of the gamut,—who does not repeat the same note eight times thinking himself to be rendering an ascending scale—is an available choir-boy, other things being equal. Dr. Madeley Richardson, of St. Saviour's Collegiate Church, London, in discussing the kind of boys that may be used, writes as follows:¹

¹*Church Music*, pp. 58, 59.

“ With the mixed choir much depended upon securing singers already qualified, who simply required a little preparation for their choir duties ; with boys everything depends not so much upon the selecting and securing of voices as upon the efficient training of the individuals when secured. This was not in the least understood when boy-choirs were first introduced ; ¹ indeed it is very far from being grasped by the average church-goer now. The widely prevalent notion still is that boys’ voices are naturally good, bad, or indifferent, and that whatever they are to start with that they will remain ; the actual fact being that it is possible by proper and skilful teaching to make almost any boy’s voice sound perfectly well and satisfactory, and that the one condition essential to success in a boys’ choir is a competent and expert teacher. . . . In selecting boys it must be remembered that it is next to impossible to tell what a raw voice may be capable of after training. Cases of really hopeless material are very rare. . . . Do not be guided by the sound of a boy’s voice so much as by his general appearance and personal character. Choose quick, lively, intelligent boys ; avoid heavy, sulky, and stupid ones.”

Of course boys who have absolutely nothing of musical instinct must not be accepted ; they are worse than useless, because they constantly and irremediably sing off the pitch. A few such boys in a choir would suffice to turn the most glorious harmonies into a hideous cacophony.

Apropos of the selection of boys, Mr. G. Edward Stubbs, choirmaster and organist of St. Agnes’ Chapel, Trinity Parish, New York, writes : ²

“ Boys are useful as choristers when they are between the ages

¹ Dr. Richardson refers to the introduction of boy-choirs into the Anglican churches.

² *Training of Choir Boys*, p. 20.

of ten and sixteen years. Under ten, although they may possess good voices, they are too young to evince sufficient musical and general intelligence to be of much service. Over sixteen, their voices are on the verge of mutation. . . . Bright, nervous, energetic boys who are fond of music make the best choristers. Those who are naturally indolent or deficient in musical instinct should be habitually avoided, even if they have superior voices. Boys of steady habits and fixed purposes are especially desirable, because they are not likely to give up their choir duties after the novelty of singing has somewhat abated. Changeable choristers are highly undesirable."

Monsieur Philippe Bellenot, the maître of the famous choir at St. Sulpice, says that he takes boys when they are nine or ten. "Very little importance," he writes, "is attached to their musical acquirements, often insignificant, but we are careful to select those who have a good ear."

III.

HOW TO ORGANIZE THE ADULT SECTION.

The men's section is made up of singers who live within the parish limits. These men form the substratum of the adult portion of a choir, and for many reasons, such as their proximity to the church and their local interest in the parochial institutions, they should be urged to join. Churches that have strong sodalities of men have in these a valuable source from which to draw the senior members. Priests may find some difficulty at first in securing a full number of adult voices, for not a few men are strangely timid about exercising the various liturgical functions imposed by the ceremonial, and some are frightened at the first prospect of being robed in cassock and surplice. With a little ingenuity and patience, however, a priest can soon remove all such apprehensions. As a rule,

these only exist in districts where chancel choirs have been wholly unknown, and after a time these fears disappear of themselves. It has been said that some Catholic singers refuse to sing with boys, "because it is too much of a humiliation." Such individuals should scrupulously be kept out of a choir, for they can but lower its spiritual tone and blunt its enthusiasm. Dispirited, unenthusiastic people are not the right material for such loyal and self-sacrificing service as Catholic chancel-singers are called upon to give. The young men of the parish are generally more to be depended upon than their seniors of the former mixed choir. It is not difficult to arouse the interest of these younger men; and if some inducements are offered, much good talent can be obtained.

After a choir has been organized a few years, the men's section will be reinforced by quondam boy-choristers, who commonly return to their choir duties when their voices have changed. A well-known writer on "Church Choirs" has said that, "the effect of educating boys for the service of the choir will be that of supplying facilities for obtaining male singers to take the lower parts as time goes on. Some of the best tenors and basses in our London Catholic choirs have been choristers in Catholic churches in their earlier years, and the great advantage which they enjoy over singers who have not had this preparation is that they are thoroughly acquainted with the ecclesiastical portion of their work." It is certainly noteworthy that those who have entered a choir as boys are frequently its most enthusiastic supporters and very reluctantly give up active service when business occupations or change of residence prevent regular attendance at the rehearsals.

The number of men required will be determined by the number of soprano boys. The correct proportion of parts which must be maintained will be seen in a further chapter.

With regard to the inducements which will serve to ensure a supply of men when it is impossible to offer any financial reimbursement, Mr. Stubbs writes :

“ There are, nevertheless, many parishes of limited means where the payment of numerous salaries is out of the question. In such places the success of a choir depends upon the personal influence of the rector and the musical abilities of the choirmaster. When no salaries are paid, the incentives to choir work are : first, sense of duty in helping on the church by volunteer performance ; secondly, musical interest engendered by the choirmaster through his successful training, leading on to a desire to sing from educational motives and for musical pleasure. However selfish this latter incentive may seem, it is practically the one to which, on the choirmaster's part, chief attention must be paid. . . . The better the choir, the greater will be the number of volunteer singers.”

Offer the men a good, practical and theoretical musical education. Propose concerts and oratorio work. Promise to be fair in assignments to the Requiem and Nuptial High Masses. Many young men will be attracted to a choir that offers good opportunities of developing and using their musical talent. The rehearsal hours can be made instructive and recreative to the highest degree, if the choirmaster or the priest in charge is at all ingenious. Short talks on the life and influence of the composers whose works the choir is studying ; systematic and careful study of excerpts from the compositions of the masters ; occasional “ smokers,” sociable meetings, etc. ; all these, and anything else that promotes interest, enthusiasm, and good feeling, should be considered powerful means of drawing men to the choir. In a word, if it is known that a choir is conducted on thoroughly modern and up-to-date methods, there will always be plenty of applicants.

“When I began my choir,” says Mr. Victor Hammerel, choirmaster of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Providence, Rhode Island, “I tried 256 boys and 79 men. Out of that number I selected the best voices, and kept a list of those with good voices, but who were not needed just then. All those belonged to our parish, which is not a very large one. Now, after one year of existence, the difficulty for me is not in finding singers, but in keeping them away.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF VOICES.

I.

WHAT number of voices is necessary for an effective chorus?

It is needless to answer that no absolute norm can be established for guidance in this matter. The quantity and quality of the individual voices, the size and architectural form of the church,—these and the other things which differ so in various places make impossible a standard which can be applied with success everywhere. Yet it must be said that it is a mistake to think large choirs necessary. The most perfect boy-choirs in the world are comparatively small. Mr. S. B. Whitney, choirmaster of the Advent Church, Boston, discusses this point succinctly: ¹

“ It has become quite the custom in some of the larger churches, especially in the West, to have large choirs of fifty, seventy-five, and even a hundred voices; but this has never been found necessary in the churches abroad, and though the church buildings are very much larger than ours, the conventional cathedral choir will hardly ever number more than thirty or forty voices. The choir of St. Paul’s Cathedral, London, numbers fifty-four voices, thirty-six boys and eighteen men. If this choir is adequate for a church that can seat easily six or eight thousand people, certainly we have no call for choirs in this country

¹ *New England Magazine*, April, 1892.

numbering over thirty voices. 'The excuse for large numbers is that a boy's voice by cultivation becomes softer, and therefore the more cultivated it becomes the greater will be the number of choristers required; certainly a mistaken idea, for, as we have mentioned, in all preliminary vocal practice, the young chorister is cautioned to sing softly, yet when the voice is thoroughly established and located, constant daily practice will soon make it as full and strong as it ever was before; besides, it is now a musical voice, and a musical tone will travel farther than a mere noise. The most noted and effective choirs, either in England or on the Continent, are, comparatively speaking, small choirs.'

Mr. John Spencer Curwen, Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music, London, quotes Dr. E. J. Hopkins as deprecating the use of large choirs: "Nowadays," the passage runs, "every one is for quantity, no quality, and coarseness is a prevailing vice. We are told of surpliced choirs of thirty-six voices, and if we go to hear them, what do we frequently find? A great racket and shouting, certainly not music."

The present writer does not intend to condemn the use of large choruses. By no means; for these are often wonderfully effective, and produce results which are altogether impossible to smaller choirs. He has quoted the statements of these eminent authorities to make it plain that heavy choruses are not *necessary*. In great cathedrals, however, the unison parts of the Gregorian chanting would seem to call for a large number of voices. But, as it is possible to get excellent musical and religious effects from large and small choirs alike, the matter is left to the tastes of individual priests and choir-masters. Monsieur Bellenot's famous choir at St. Sulpice is made up of "twelve soprani, eight alti, four tenors and four basses, not counting the seminarians." The choir at the new Cathedral at Westminster (a vast edifice) numbers only forty

voices,—sixteen men and twenty-four boys, with eight of the twenty-four boys in the probationers' class; and yet we are hearing every day fresh reports of its marvelous effectiveness. On the other hand, there are two well-known choirs at home here—the best perhaps in Catholic churches—whose personnel includes anywhere from seventy to eighty-five voices,—the Boston Cathedral sanctuary choir, and the choir of St. Paul's Church, in Fifty-ninth Street, New York.

II.

The proper balancing of the parts should be carefully thought about, before a choirmaster selects his material. A top-heavy choir can never rise above mediocrity. It is absolutely essential that a correct proportion of voices be maintained, and yet we have had boy-choirs here, in which the so-called alto section seemed to be ever striving to divert attention from the sopranos, and in which baritone-tenors have been introduced in such numbers as to make it almost impossible for the listener to catch anything of the melodic theme in a concerted piece. Occasionally, too, one hears a choir where the soprano boys seem to be now stridently asserting their rights against a disproportionate section of *bassos*, and now plaintively pleading with them for their allotted share in the *ensemble*. A choir of unbalanced parts can produce only indifferent effects. A choirmaster in organizing, then, should first have a definite idea of the number of soprano boys he expects to employ; from this he will be able to determine, approximately at least, the number of altos, tenors, and basses which will be needed. A choir carelessly organized in this respect—and unfortunately these are not altogether unknown—always lacks that “something” which gives such an inexplicable charm to a well-balanced chorus. The usual advice

is this: sopranos should form one-half of the whole choir; the basses should be next in prominence; and there should be about an equal number of tenors and altos. "As to balance of voices," says Dr. Richardson, "the aim should be to have a fairly equal number of each of the three lower parts, with a slight preponderance of basses, but a good deal will always depend upon the power of individual voices. One bass voice may occasionally be found which will equal in volume of tone three others; and in these cases we must be guided by tonal rather than by numerical strength. The number of boys' voices should greatly exceed that of any one of the lower parts. A good balance is obtained when they are made to equal the sum of all the other voices together." (Dr. Richardson evidently refers to choirs where the adult male alto is employed.) Mr. John Spencer Curwen calls the attention of his readers to the following table given by Mr. H. B. Roney of Chicago, instructor of the famous Blatchford Kavanagh.¹

Sopranos	12	17	25	37	50
Altos	4	5	7	11	14
Tenors	4	5	8	11	14
Basses	5	8	10	16	22
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	25	35	50	75	100

Mr. Stubbs agrees that "when circumstances permit, there should be as many men as boys in the choir." (He, too, is thinking of choirs where the boy-alto is not employed.) "For example," he continues, "to balance eighteen well-trained sopranos, there should be eight basses, six tenors, and four altos, if the alto part be sung by men. But voices differ so much in force and carrying power that no definite rule can

¹ *The Boys' Voice*, p. 16.

be laid down as to proportion of parts. The best results, however, are obtained only where the choir contains a full number of men. Care should be taken that the alto and tenor parts be not too prominent." Mr. Stubbs adds a footnote, which has a particular significance for our choirs which will render so many parts of the services in unison: "Besides the harmonic gain, bold unison passages ring out with telling effect when the choir is plentifully supplied with adult voices. In small choirs, where the boys are supported by a few men, unison music is generally ineffective."

III.

This brings us to another important point,—the necessity of care in forming the alto section. There has been a general enough tendency to slight this part of the choir and to minimize its importance. This is not fair to the alto voice, which is of a very telling timbre and must be guarded and developed with as much assiduity as the soprano. Sometimes, unfortunately, it has been thought necessary to assign the alto parts to broken-down trebles, boys whose soprano notes have become a pleasant memory. This substitution of a counterfeit for the legitimate alto can never wholly be concealed, for each of the four parts demands its proper and distinctive voice.

There has been much discussion among musicians as to the availability of the boy-alto voice. Some have even felt that such a voice is an anomaly, and that the real, genuine alto quality which, it has been thought, comes only with mature physical development, is exceptional in boys. Some men eminent in boy-choir work have taken this side of the controversy, while many other noted directors have been insistent in their defence of the boy-alto. The question at best is not decided, but we judge from the personnel of most choirs here—

Catholic and non-Catholic alike—that the preponderance of opinion in this country is for the boys. It is important that choirmasters who are about to engage in sanctuary-choir work, should be thoroughly conversant with the state of the question.

The man-alto and the boy-alto (we are convinced there is such a voice) are two really distinct voices; the former is merely a falsetto baritone and the latter is a pure and natural voice. In this connection John Spencer Curwen says:

“In English cathedrals, the alto part has been given ever since the Restoration to adult men, generally with bass voices singing in the ‘thin’ register. . . . For this voice Handel wrote, and the listener at the Handel Festival cannot but feel the strength and resonance which the large number of men-altos give to the harmony when the range of the part is low. The voice of the man-alto, however, was never common, and is becoming less common than it was. It occupies a curious position, never having been recognized as a solo voice. . . . This voice is entirely an English institution, unknown on the Continent. Historians say that after the Restoration, when it was very difficult to obtain choir-boys, adult men learned to sing alto, and even low treble parts, in falsetto in order to make harmony possible.

“The dilemma is that in parish churches, especially in country districts, the adult male alto is not to be had, and the choice is between boy-altos and no altos at all. There is no doubt, moreover, that the trouble of voice management in the boy-altos can be conquered by watchfulness and care.”

Mr. Curwen, in preparing his book on *The Boy's Voice*, has collected much information on this subject. We will here quote two extracts of letters which he received from English boy-choir directors. Mr. Taylor, organist of New College, Oxford, is quoted as follows: “I can confidently recommend

boy-altos in parish or other choirs, provided they are carefully trained." And Dr. Garret, organist of St. John's College, Cambridge, writes, in part:

"If I could have really first-class adult altos in my choir, I should not think of using boys' voices. At the same time, there are some advantages on the side of boys' voices. (1) Unless the adult alto voice is really pure and good, and its possessor a skilled singer, it is too often unbearable. (2) Under the most favorable conditions, it is very rare, according to my experience, to find an alto voice retaining its best qualities after middle age. (3) The alto voice is undoubtedly becoming rare.

"On the other side, you have to consider: (1) The limitation in choice of music, as there is a good deal . . . in which the alto part is beyond the range of any boy's voice. (2) A lack of brightness in the upper part of some trios, etc."

It is not to the purpose to go further into this controversy. It is sufficient to have indicated that there are valid reasons for both sides. For our present practical purposes there can scarcely be any doubt about the advisability of using boy-altos. The writer has visited many choirs in which there is excellent material for good alto sections among the boys. Two of the most remarkable boy singers he has had the pleasure of listening to were altos.

Mr. J. C. Ungerer, of the New York Cathedral, expresses it as his opinion that "the use of adult male altos should not be encouraged; although they answer the purpose when competent readers (boys) cannot be found." And Mr. A. B. Meyers, choirmaster of St. Vincent's, South Boston, writes, "Men-altos are desirable from the point of view of expediency, but the rich quality of the *real* boy-alto is, in my opinion, preferable." Mr. Meyers adds, that he thinks this real boy-

alto a very rare voice, and admits that he finds it necessary "to take larger boys from the soprani to fill up the ranks of the alti."

Mr. Hammerel of Providence expresses himself as "decidedly against using adult male altos," and finds no trouble in securing good boy-altos and more than enough. Sometimes, however, one is driven by circumstances to give the alto parts to second trebles, in order to make concerted singing possible, but choirmasters should make every effort to obtain the real alto voices.

CHAPTER V.

HINTS FOR MAINTAINING A CHOIR.

THE personnel of a boy-choir is always changing. At the age of fifteen years or thereabouts, the boys begin to "lose their voices." The process of development from boyhood to man's estate, is accompanied by a deepening and thickening of the larynx, and during a period of three or four years the voice should not be used for singing. A choirmaster will be seriously handicapped in his efforts to keep the choir up to a high standard, if some reliable means have not been provided for offsetting the inevitable leakage occasioned by the mutation of the boys' voices. It is very necessary, therefore, to organize the choir, in the beginning, in such a way that the loss of a few sopranos and altos each year, will not be a serious obstacle in the way of the choir's progress.

Naturally we look to England, the home and nursery of the highest type of the boy-choir, for advice and suggestions in this matter. The system which secures to all the great choirs there such a continual supply of competent choristers merits examination.

In almost all the cathedral churches; and in very many smaller places of worship, the boys are divided into two groups. The first, or senior group, consists of those already equipped for regular service in the church; the second, or junior group, is made up of younger boys who form a preparatory class, and attend all the rehearsals. The senior boys

are called, in choir nomenclature, "choristers," and the junior boys "probationers." A choir that maintains a good class of probationers enjoys great advantage over choirs where this or a similar system of replenishing the parts does not obtain.

Probationers may begin their career as young as seven years of age. The boys enter the choir at Westminster Abbey at nine or ten, never older.

The advantages of such a plan are manifest. A boy's relationship with his choir lasts through a period of more than seven years; his voice is trained from the beginning on distinctive methods and with a view to church work; by such long attendance he becomes thoroughly familiar with all the Offices, and knows a considerable portion of the service-music by heart; when a chorister's voice gives warning of the approaching change, the choirmaster has merely to announce a competitive examination to the probationers, and to award the place of the retiring chorister to the winner. Readers are referred to Mr. Curwen's book (*Boy's Voice*, p. 58, *seqq.*) for many interesting facts about England's great choirs. Referring to the success of the choirmaster at Temple Church, Oxford, he says: "He lays stress on the fact that he takes his boys at eight years of age. For a year or more they are probationers. . . . They undergo daily drill in musical theory and voice training, but in church they have no responsibility and do little more than listen. When, however, the voice of one of the older boys breaks, a probationer takes his place, and is much better for the training."

The writer has already referred to the choir recently established at our new Cathedral at Westminster. It will be remembered that this choir, too, is made up of choristers and probationers. Mr. Robert Gannon, organist and choirmaster

at the Mission Church (Redemptorist Fathers), Boston, writes: "The school here is a great help for furnishing material. I have a class of probationers who attend the rehearsals and vocalize with the regulars, and recently I admitted ten boys to the regular choir. They were between the ages of nine and eleven." Dr. Martin, of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, writes: "In a working choir of about sixteen boys, the ages of the children should be arranged thus:

4	boys	from	12	to	13	years	of	age
4	"	"	11	to	12	"	"	"
4	"	"	10	to	11	"	"	"
4	"	"	9	to	10	"	"	"

There should also be at least four probationers from eight to nine years of age."

In short it is the rare exception to find a choir of any pretensions without a preparatory class of some sort.

If music had a more conspicuous place in the schools, the problem of meeting the leakage in the boys' section would be effectually solved. Mr. Ungerer writes: "We make an unpardonable mistake in depriving our children of a thorough musical education in the schoolroom. Progressive work begun at the earliest possible stage would show great results. Every child ten years of age is a chorister. This would be method."

There is no doubt that if music were taught more thoroughly and intelligently in our parochial schools, sanctuary choirs could be maintained with much less difficulty. Father Young, the noted Jesuit musician of St. Francis' College, New York, is quoted in the *New York Sun* as saying: "I am very much encouraged by the success I have had with my boys in the parochial school, and I am more than ever convinced that

every reform desired by the Pope could be brought about if the children were now taught the Gregorian Chant in our Catholic schools."

The music commission of the Archdiocese of New York has also expressed a conviction of the necessity of a thorough musical education in the schools in recommending to the priests "that systematic teaching of music be required in all Catholic schools; that examinations in it be regularly made by the diocesan school inspector as in other studies; and that where no Catholic school exists, a music class for men or boys, or both, be formed at once. The teaching, to be effective, is to comprise (a) sight reading; (b) voice training; (c) the study of the various chants of High Mass, Vespers, and Benediction." The Right Reverend Bishop of Portland, Maine, in a pastoral letter, has also enjoined upon his priests the careful training of school children in "the principal hymns of the liturgy, such as the *Salve Regina*, *Alma Redemptoris*, etc., and the Ordinary of the Mass according to the Gregorian notation."

It is quite generally held that the boy choristers should receive some honorarium—trifling though it be—in recognition of their services. The advantages which accrue from paying the boys, make this suggestion worthy of serious consideration. The choirmaster has, thereby, a sure means of procuring prompt and regular attendance at the services and rehearsals; the power of imposing fines and suspension for repeated misdemeanors, which this system provides, has a disciplinary value in the management of naturally mischievous and inattentive boys. Furthermore, it is but fair to give the lads some slight compensation for all the sacrifices which the frequent rehearsals and the long and numerous services demand of them. They are only boys, and they have boys' hearts and

boys' points of view. It should be remembered that regular attendance often requires heroic virtue of them, for they must forego many football games in the autumn, coasting and skating in the winter, and—the greatest sacrifice of all—baseball in the spring. Prove to them that their services are appreciated—not by patting them on the head and calling them “nice boys” and prophesying great careers for them—but by giving them some stated reimbursement at regular intervals. Do this and you will suffer but little annoyance from tardiness or carelessness about the meetings. Choirmasters who have had much experience with boys, find that choirs where some system of compensation prevails, are much more reliable than the others. We quote a paragraph from Dr. Richardson:

“Whenever possible, boys should be paid, however small a sum; but it should be made clear that the amount given is to be regarded as pocket money in recognition of the work and self-sacrifice involved in attending practice. . . . Payment by number of attendances is to be deprecated. A certain fixed sum should be given weekly or monthly, out of which a large portion should be deducted as a fine for absence without leave. This fine should be prohibitive, so as to make it clear that irregularity cannot be tolerated.”

In parishes where Requiem and Nuptial High Masses are frequent, and where the custom prevails of paying those who in regular turn sing at these services, the payment of regular stipends can be more readily dispensed with; but the advantages of allowing to each boy a monthly wage of fifty cents or a dollar cannot be minimized.

It is impossible to consider here all the circumstances which may arise to retard the progress of a choir. The suggestions which are offered in this chapter have been culled from the experiences of able men, and the writer hopes that they may

serve to lighten the labors and insure the success of those who have sought instruction in these pages.

There are two further points which may here be considered as bearing closely upon the subject-matter of this chapter,

(1) on the part of priests—interest in their choirs—

(2) on the part of choirmasters—*intelligent* disciplinary methods.

With regard to the first, it should be said that the clergy have it within their power to inspire enthusiasm and choir-spirit to a high degree, or to create dissatisfaction and indifference among the choristers. The priests should encourage the choirmaster and singers heartily and upon every possible occasion. They should appear sometimes at the rehearsals, and lend a willing ear to propositions and projects which are designed to further the best interests of the choir. The attitude taken by the pastor or the curates toward the choir has often a determining influence upon the members. Priests who wish regular attendance and enthusiastic service should second the choirmaster's efforts to make singing and the other choir-duties a pleasure rather than a duty. A word of congratulation after a well-rendered service, and other slight tokens of appreciation sometimes infuse new life into a choir, while on the other hand, singers are often much disappointed and chagrined if their special efforts pass unnoticed.

The importance of maintaining *intelligent* discipline cannot be overestimated. Corporal punishment and rough treatment of any kind are among the elements which tend to disband a choir. Mr. Henry Duncan, a New York choirmaster, writes of "The Real Choir-Boy neither an Angel nor a Deliberate Sinner—Just a Boy." We refer our readers to an instructive and amusing article under this naïve title, in the *New York Sun* of April 17, 1904.

The management of the choir will offer no trouble to priests or choirmasters where the boys are taken from parish schools. The school Sisters are always actively interested in anything that concerns the children, and their influence in the disciplinary matters of the choir is paramount. Choirmasters who have had the help of Sisters in this direction, know well how to value it. The writer can attest from personal experience the great relief that comes to a choir-director from their kindly coöperation in fitting the boys for their choir duties. From the start, an *intelligent* discipline should be maintained as well at rehearsals as at services. Where a lax discipline obtains much valuable time is wasted, and eventually the lads lose respect for the director. But there is no place for punctilious orderliness or rigorous silence; these do very well for the schoolroom, but cannot be brought into the choir-hall without tiring the boys and destroying spontaneity. The choir-room should be made popular. The choirmaster should be loved. There should be a spirit of easy freedom about the rehearsal; the lads ought to feel that a certain amount of relaxation is legitimate, and that they can converse quietly and enjoy themselves during the intervals when music is being distributed, or when, for any other reason, there is a temporary cessation of work. Boys appreciate these little liberties, and when the signal is given to resume the practice, they begin again with fresh vigor. Choir-boys ought to be granted every concession and privilege consistent with respectable discipline. A certain code of choir rules should be drawn up with care and hung in a conspicuous place in the choir-hall. Serious and frequent infractions of these should be punished with proportionate severity. Connivance at violations of regulations is an infallible way to lose control of choir-boys. Where some system of reimbursing the boys is in use, fines for tardiness,

absence, misbehavior, etc., may be imposed with good effect. "Reproof," says a director of long experience, "should be administered in private." Mr. Curwen thinks well of the plan of an eminent choirmaster "who advocates a choir guild, and would have in the choir-room a library, games, puzzles, footballs, bats and balls, Indian clubs and dumb bells." "Offensive manners," once wrote a director of music in a cathedral, "on the part of the trainer quickly endanger the existence of the choir. . . . 'I cannot think why that boy does not sing in tune; I have boxed his ears,' said a cathedral organist to me quite seriously. . . . I fear there is a vulgar notion (only half defined, most probably) that irascibility in the musical trainer is a mark of genius."

To sum up:

Under ordinary circumstances, the maintenance of a liturgical choir will present no difficulty, if

- (1) a number of *probationers* is enlisted.
- (2) a course of music is provided in the parish school.
- (3) the choristers are allowed a monthly stipend.
- (4) the priests in charge display sufficient interest in matters pertaining to the choir.
- (5) the choirmaster adopts and enforces a sane and considerate method of discipline.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHOIR AND ORGAN IN THE CHANCEL.

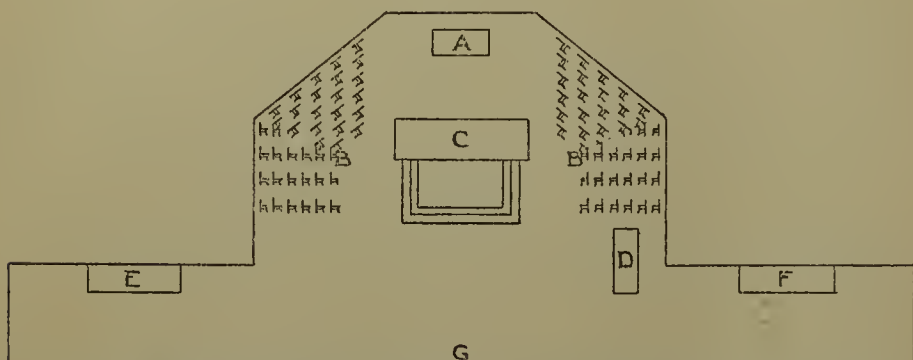
WHETHER it is possible, a liturgical choir should be seated in the chancel. The liturgy by its very construction demands the services of choristers who occupy stalls not far distant from the sanctuary and the High Altar. Surplined chancel-singers are just as necessary for the complete ritual of a solemn service, as the ministers and altar boys. The Roman rite of Solemn Vespers, for instance, could never be carried out in detail, without the presence of singers in the chancel. The logic of the ritual demands a sanctuary-choir; there is no need of argument about this, for were it otherwise, the considerable portions of the *Ceremoniale* (see Martinucci) which are devoted to the functions and duties of the choir-singers would be obviously superfluous. Nor is it necessary to insist that the elaborate ceremonies which require a chancel-choir, in order to be carried out in their entirety, are not meant to be confined to cathedral, conventual or collegiate churches, where the choirs are composed chiefly of clerics. It is clear that wherever the Roman rite extends, and wherever the solemnity of that rite is observed, every choir, even when made up of laymen, is meant to fulfil the office of the choir of levites. We have this from Pope Pius X himself: "the liturgical chant belongs to the *choir of levites*, and, therefore, singers in church, even when laymen, are really taking the place of the ecclesiastical choir." Says Mr. Wilfrid Anthony (*Eccles-*

iaistical Review, June, 1904): "Since there is to be in every well-appointed church a chanters' choir composed of men and boys, the question arises where this liturgical choir is to be placed. The choice is twofold. The first is to place it in front of the sanctuary, that is, between it and the nave, and on a somewhat lower level than the former. . . . The plan is, moreover, in accordance with the *Ceremonial of Bishops*. Graduated stalls may be placed choirwise for the accommodation of the organist and director on one side. The organ may be located on one or both sides of the choir. The alternative disposition of the liturgical choir is to place it back of the sanctuary. This is more rarely done, and when adopted it is chiefly in churches built in the Romanesque or the Byzantine style, as in the case of the new Cathedral at Westminster."

But we have no chancels, is the first objection that confronts one here. Yes, it is true, we have few churches with this essential complement of a perfect church building; and, "Oh, the pity of it!" says one who knows, "they are building a \$700,000 cathedral here in 'trade' Gothic; and *there is no chancel*." But if we have not many deep chancels, we have at least sanctuaries of comfortable dimensions, and these can be made to serve the purpose. Of the two diagrams given here, Fig. I represents an ideal way of arranging the choir, and Fig. II a very satisfactory adaptation of the sanctuary of the average American church to the purposes of a sanctuary choir. When the singers are seated according to the plan suggested by Fig. I, the rubrical division of the choir is observed, and the choirmaster seated behind the High Altar, can see and direct both sides unobserved by the congregation. This plan is realized in the Church of St. Paul the Apostle (Paulist Fathers) New York, and in the Blessed Sacrament

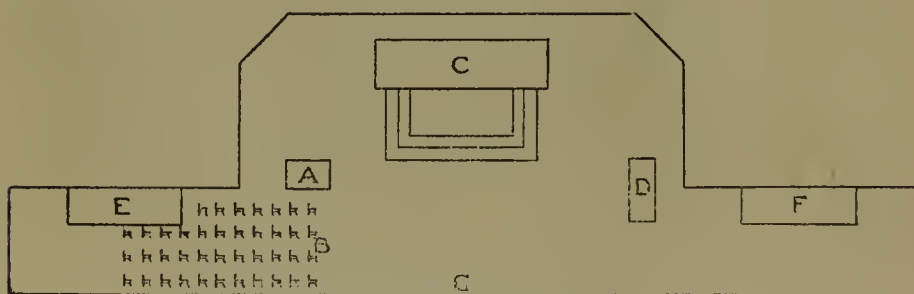
Church, Providence, Rhode Island. Although Fig. I does not meet all the requirements of Baldeschi's diagrams of the traditional chancel, yet it has illustrious precedents in the churches of St. Sulpice, Paris, Notre Dame, Paris, St. Germain de

Fig.
I



A—Organ Console. B and B'—Choir. C—High Altar. D—Celebrant's Bench. E and F—Side Altars. G—Sanctuary Rail.

Fig.
II.



A—Organ Console. B—Choir. C—High Altar. D—Celebrant's Bench. E and F—Side Altars. G—Sanctuary Rail.

Prés, Paris, the Chartres cathedral, the Church of the Freri, Venice, etc., and it lends itself to the full ceremonial of the most solemn offices. If the matter of remodeling a sanctuary

to meet the specifications of Fig I seems impracticable, or too expensive, for some of our smaller parochial churches, it must be said that there are very few sanctuaries in city churches that cannot easily and at a moderate expense be rearranged according to Fig II.

The letter A in both diagrams indicates the position of the key-board or console of the organ; the organ pipes can be set up in any convenient niche—even in the gallery—provided that resonance is not destroyed.

It has been objected that “a chancel choir placed according to either of these two diagrams, will find its chief function in being ornamental.” Whether this will prove true or not in particular churches depends entirely upon the musicianship and ability of the man in charge of the choir. It is unnecessary to give here the long list of world-famed choirs which have been seated in the manner suggested. The choirs at St. Sulpice and Westminster Cathedral seem to have succeeded in being more than ornamental. And who can point to better choirs or choirs which sing more difficult polyphony in this country, than those singing regularly at St. Paul’s Church, New York City, Holy Cross Cathedral, Boston and the Blessed Sacrament Church, Providence, Rhode Island?

In churches where it is altogether impracticable to arrange the choir gracefully in the sanctuary, it will do very well to seat it *choirwise* in the west-end gallery. The choristers in any case, should be surpliced. (See *Motu proprio*, section V, § 14.)

The art of organ-building has made such progress during the past few decades, that it is now a comparatively simple matter to put effective instruments into places that fifty years ago would have been considered irremediably unsuited to any kind of an organ. The invention and perfecting of the

“tubular-pneumatic,” and “electro-pneumatic” actions, have made it possible to separate the pipes from the console, or controlling-desk, at any distance; and we seldom hear in these days of any large organ that is not provided with a movable console. These recent developments of organ construction remove the obstacle which—if only the “tracker” organ were still known—would render the erection of sanctuary organs impossible in our ordinary churches. In churches where there are large transepts, the organ pipes can be very readily set up in these,—the entire organ in one, or the “swell” organ in one and the “great” organ in the other. Where there are no transepts or available niches, or no triforium, the pipes may have to be placed in the gallery. Even this arrangement proves very satisfactory. The hiatus between the depression of the keys at the console in the sanctuary and the speaking of the pipes in the gallery at the opposite end of the building, can be reduced to a minimum, and will rarely annoy an organist after he has become accustomed to it. There are some very well-known organs divided in this way, notably the majestic instrument in St. Bartholomew’s Church (Episcopalian), New York, built a few years ago by the Hutchings-Votey Company of Boston. The specification of this organ includes fifty registers in the chancel division and forty-nine registers in the gallery division, with all the necessary push-knob and oscillating-tablet combinations, etc., and the entire organ is operated at one console connected with the organ by a flexible cable one hundred and fifty feet in length; the organ can be played from any part of the church. For those who think it a great disadvantage to have the organ built so high above the choir, we quote a comment on the new organ built at Symphony Hall, Boston: “It may be that the height gives it a clearer reflection from the roof of the auditorium,

for we all recall some cathedral organs in Europe which are also built high above the worshipping congregations, yet reflect down their tones from the vaulted roof above with glorious power and perfect preservation of those minute vibrations (overtones) which constitute the quality of every musical tone."

Priests may well ask here about the expense incurred in fitting up churches with these chancel organs.¹ In answer to this question, it must be said that in very many churches the organs now in use are unnecessarily large. Although brilliant organs add an unmistakable charm to the musical performance, yet they are not *necessary*, and in treating of an outfit for conducting the musical services on the principles of the reform, we are speaking primarily of what is necessary. The writer saw the specification of a chancel organ recently built in a Catholic church by the Austin Organ Company; compared with the average gallery organs of our larger churches, this instrument is small, and yet it is more than adequate to accompany a choir of sixty voices. It is a mistake to think that we must have expensive organs of \$12,000 and \$15,000. There is no need for the fancy and costly orchestral stops — the *Tibia Plena*, *Tuba Sonora*, *Orchestral Oboe*, *Philomela*, *Hohlpfeife*, etc.—which are expected in the up-to-date concert organ. Our organs are intended to *accompany the voices*, and very inexpensive instruments can be made to serve this purpose satisfactorily.

The initial cost of equipping the church with the various facilities for successfully carrying on choir work should be considered in the light of the increased attendance at the solemn services, which invariably comes with the introduction

¹ We call them chancel-organs, even if the pipes are in the gallery, for as far as the choir and the congregation are concerned, the music is practically emanating from the console in the sanctuary.

of a good boy-choir. The objection that "people will give up their pews when the mixed choir is disbanded" counts for nothing when compared with the fact that, *wherever a well organized, carefully trained and thoroughly equipped boy-choir has been introduced, the congregations at the musical services have become notably larger.* A prominent pastor of an Eastern diocese here, has written to say: "They may say what they like about boys' choirs not being popular, but we cannot seat the people at our High Mass, and all the other churches are half empty at High Mass." If a choir is conducted carefully and intelligently, it will pay for itself.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHOIRMASTER.

THE choirmaster is the very soul of the choir, animating and governing it," says Dr. Haberl of the Ratisbon Cathedral. "As the choirmaster is, so the choir will be," may be a truism, but it can well bear repetition in these days, for the degree of proficiency and popularity to which a choir will attain depends finally, and after everything else has been said, upon the man to whose musical direction it is entrusted. If he is a thoroughly competent director as well as organist, and if besides musicianship, he brings into his work enthusiasm for the details of choir-training, and some appreciation of the responsibilities of the *maître de chapelle*, it is highly probable that the results of his labors will be satisfactory, and if on the other hand, he is mercenary, assuming and holding the position merely for the sake of the prestige or financial gain that may accrue therefrom, it is equally probable that his choir will be only indifferently effective.

It is important then for pastors to be most circumspect and discriminating in their choice of choirmasters. And it should not be difficult to secure leaders of the right type, for the Catholic musicians of the United States are men of marked talent, and can very readily fit themselves for successful careers as directors of liturgical choirs. And they will,—if the priests urge them. Let the clergy make it known that there is pressing demand for well qualified chancel-choirmasters, and the supply will come quickly.

Our musicians must learn to feel the dignity of the choir-master's position in a parish. If they look upon themselves as hirelings, it is scarce likely that they will devote themselves to the arduous labors entailed in maintaining the correct type of musical service, with sufficient interest to be proof against the inevitable discouragements which come from time to time, particularly during the first years of a choir's existence.

There is, of course, more than a professional side to a choir-master's relation to a church. His obligations to a parish are not satisfied when he has fulfilled the requirements of a contract made out upon a business basis. He has the exalted vocation of assisting the people to pray, and of preaching to their hearts of God and the holy things of religion by the subtle eloquence of the musical art. What greater vocation is there than to help men to come near to God? Does he not share this privilege with the priests? Says Dr. Haberl, "No matter how great his musical talents otherwise may be, the choirmaster who cannot identify his way of thinking with that of the Church as expressed in her liturgy, and who fancies that he adequately discharges his duty by merely *making music* whilst a religious function is being gone through, is deficient in one of the most important qualifications for his position." The priest who assists his choirmaster to realize the dignity and responsibility of the office he exercises, will win sympathetic coöperation in the matter of providing music worthy of the ritual it is permitted to accompany.

It is the purpose of this chapter briefly to summarize the qualifications which, in the opinion of experienced men, seem necessary for the master of a liturgical choir. The subject will not be treated exhaustively here, because in the various other chapters of this brochure the requirements of efficient directorship are made sufficiently evident.

The office of choirmaster is not only musical, but liturgical also. He is a second *Master of Ceremonies*, as it were, and should be thoroughly acquainted with everything that bears upon the perfect rendering of the musical portions of the services. The ideal choirmaster combines the musician, the liturgist, the rubrician.

The musical equipment which is indispensable for the successful direction of liturgical choirs, implies roughly:

- (1) Skill as an organist and harmonist.
- (2) Proficiency in the art of training boys' voices.
- (3) Knowledge of Gregorian Chant.

It should be said here, that notwithstanding opinions to the contrary, there seems to be great advantage in embodying the director and organist in one man. Nothing is more obvious than that in choirs where Gregorian Chant is to be the predominating style of music used, the organist must have the reins in his hand absolutely. Any organist of skill who has also had charge of choirs or bodies of singers, will realize that there are subtle ways, which, indeed, he himself cannot explain, but by which, with his fingers on the keys, he can so wield his singers as to produce any desired impression upon their minds. In these days of opportunity for the able organist, he should not be content merely to be a mechanical automaton while another man as director holds the authority and represents the greater brains of the combination. Much better results can be obtained if the offices of leader and organist are combined in one. A further advantage to the parish would be in the proportionately less expense. And so in this chapter, and throughout the book, consistently with this view, we have considered the organist and director as embodied in one man, who is designated the *choirmaster*.

The average organist of our city churches will find the

process of acquiring the necessary equipment neither lengthy nor expensive; he can in a short time familiarize himself with enough of the principles, included in the branches specified, to make a safe and intelligent beginning with a choir. But no one should venture to assume the responsibility of preparing a liturgical choir for its share in the ceremonies of public worship, until he has fully realized and mastered the fundamental points of differentiation between the choirmaster's functions and other musical activities.

I.

Were it not for the growing tendency to engage men as choirmasters whose musical education has been confined chiefly to the pianoforte, and whose *touch* and method of registration (if alternate use of *great* and *swell* and *ff* and *pp* can be dignified by such a name) are totally at variance with the first rules of organ-playing, it would be superfluous to say that, as organist, a choirmaster should be thoroughly trained in the technicalities of organ-playing, and well versed in the classics of organ literature. Pianists are not organists; the piano and organ are essentially different in character—they are alike in this only that they are operated by means of similarly constructed keyboards. Hence the necessity of the player being a genuine organist.

A practical knowledge of harmony and counterpoint is scarcely less important than facility in playing the organ. In these days of the restoration of the Gregorian melodies, the necessity for skill in these branches is even greater than heretofore. The organist's education was at no time complete until he had mastered the theory of harmony and counterpoint, and now he is seriously handicapped, if not altogether incapacitated for accompanying a choir, if he is not in possession

of a practical working knowledge of these. There have been published many harmonizations of the Gregorian Masses, motets, etc., but these by no means remove the necessity of each organist being personally capable of arranging and harmonizing the chant for himself.

II.

A choirmaster should be aware of the peculiar properties of the boy-voice, and have learned how best to realize its rich possibilities. The matter of the training of the choir is discussed in Chapters IX, X, XI and XII, and it is unnecessary to say more here, save that choirmasters should devote themselves assiduously to the study of the tendencies which characterize the development of the child-voice. They should become familiar, too, with the current methods for clarifying the distinctly spiritual quality of the boy's soprano, and the various processes for effecting and preserving that imperceptible fusion of its two registers which has brought such perfection to the great English choirs.

It is a pity that there have been some choirs here in which the mention of a special system of training the children's voices would have been as much a surprise to the directors as to the choristers themselves. The necessity of using a method of voice culture which would be especially applicable to the vocal and physical conditions of boys from eight to fifteen years of age seems not to have been appreciated by all who in the past had announced themselves as competent directors of boy-choirs. The singing of indifferently trained boys, and even the singing of boys who have received a certain amount of intelligent vocal instruction but not according to the principles and methods which constitute the art of teaching chancel-choirs—a distinct branch of the musical profession—is often

intolerable, strident and unrefined, lacking in flexibility, smoothness and general finish.

Within the past few decades the science of chancel-choir training has made great strides, and there is no question that bears upon the correct managing and training of choirs and choristers that has not been to some extent solved by the investigations and experiences of the last quarter of a century. The names of some of England's and America's most famous musicians are associated with the development of this unique branch of the musical profession. We subjoin a list of the most pertinent literature which has been published in English upon the subject. Every choirmaster should possess the following books, for in these he will have a valuable compendium of the theory of training, managing, and conducting chancel-choirs. It is likely that they are to be found upon the shelves of the larger public libraries:

The Boy's Voice, J. Spencer Curwen (G. Schirmer & Co., New York).

The Art of Training Choir Boys, Dr. G. C. Martin (Novello, Ewer & Co., New York).

A Treatise on a Practical Method of Training Choristers, Dr. J. Varley Roberts (Henry Frowde, 91 Fifth Ave., New York).

Practical Hints on the Training of Choir-Boys, G. E. Stubbs (Novello, Ewer & Co., New York).

The Child's Voice, Emil Behnke (G. Schirmer & Co., New York).

Voice, Song and Speech, Browne and Behnke (G. Schirmer & Co., New York).

The Voice in Singing, Madame Seiler (G. Schirmer & Co., New York).

Studies in Worship Music, J. S. Curwen, (1st series) p. 312 *seq.* (G. Schirmer & Co., New York).

Church Music, Dr. A. Madeley Richardson (Chapter IV) (Longmans, Green & Co., New York).

III.

Although the singers can be spared much of the theoretical study of the chant, the choirmaster must go properly into its technical analysis, and to that end he cannot do better than to study the Rev. Dr. Haberl's *Magister Choralis* (Fr. Pustet & Co., New York) translated from German into English, French, Italian, and several other languages. It is a most valuable and lucid compendium, and in its second division (*sectio theoretica*) the student will find in concise form all that is necessary for him to know as to the modal structure of the chant. Another useful text-book is Lemaistre's *Complete and Practical Method of the Solesmes Plain Chant*,¹ adapted and translated from Dom Birkle, O. S. B.

It has been said by some that proficiency in the chant and the right appreciation of its peculiar genius come only after many years spent in its study. This may be so, but it is also true that men who have gone through a good course in general musical theory can in a few weeks and without extraordinary difficulty, so master the general principles of the subject as to be able intelligently to apply their knowledge of the same to practical purposes.

The well informed instructor in Church music should also have a fair knowledge of the Latin language. He should scrupulously strive to qualify himself upon this essential point, for the intelligent rendering of vocal music requires, first of all, an understanding of the verbal text. "Without a fair knowledge of Latin," writes Dr. Haberl, "he cannot understand the sentiments conveyed in the words, and therefore

¹ Joseph F. Wagner, 9 Barclay St., New York.

give the just expression to these words or to the melody in which they are clothed; for it should be ever remembered, that in ecclesiastical chant the 'text is the master, the notes the slaves' It is also desirable that he should know how to use the ecclesiastical calendar (*Ordo*), in order that he may find the chants prescribed for the day or season, and regulate their performance with the requirements of the rubrics."

The foregoing are in general outline the qualifications which should distinguish a really competent choirmaster. Complete mastery of the organ, a grasp of practical harmony and counterpoint, skill in developing the child-voice, and knowledge of Gregorian Chant, are about what is necessary and sufficient in the way of musical equipment, for the present-day choirmaster. It is understood, of course, in addition to these, that he should have a proper appreciation of the spirit of the Church's liturgy and knowledge of the details of the various solemn ceremonies. In the words of the great Kapellmeister of Ratisbon, "the choirmaster who seeks to discharge his duty faithfully, must allow this spirit of the Liturgy to take possession of him; he must as it were live with the Church and enter into her feelings; weep with her in her sorrow, and exult in her joy;—otherwise he can never realize for himself or those under him, the meaning of the occasion which she solemnizes, or of the words which she employs."

PART II.

THE TRAINING OF A BOYS' AND MEN'S CHOIR.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF A BOY-CHOIR.

THE characteristic which differentiates the boy-voice, clearly and beyond any doubt, from other human voices, is essentially this, that it is absolutely free from any even remote suggestion of personal sentiment. It is not colored by the exaggerated emotion or the latent passionateness which must to the end unfit the female voice for use in purely ecclesiastical music. Boys are capable of religious emotions, but anything like a personal, passionate, human sentiment is altogether impossible in their stage of physical development. Boys can express only such ideas as are inseparably connected with the spiritual tone of a composition. Women, on the other hand, can hardly avoid adding something of their own personal sentiment and mood; their tones insinuate something at variance with the strictly sacred and ecclesiastical character which should pervade all the music performed at the Offices of the Most High. And so it may be said that the feature which makes boys' voices *par excellence* the perfect instrument for the rendition of the chant and the other legitimate styles of ritual-song, is something negative if compared to the female voice, and something positive if compared to the coarse and strident tones of boys before they have been trained.

Obviously, then, the *sine qua non* of the success of boy-choirs is the correct formation and development of those qualities which make the boy's soprano and alto preëminently the best

vehicle for the expression of the religious sentiments of Catholic ritual-music.

The scientific cultivation of the boy-voice is a department of vocal art which is entirely distinct, in method, from all other systems of voice culture. The average boy is endowed with a natural voice practically identical in quality and timbre with that of the girl of like age. The physiological construction of the vocal organs is the same in both boy and girl, and continues up to the inevitable time of mutation in the boy-voice, which occurs generally between the ages of fourteen and sixteen. The purpose of vocal training during the four to six years' period of the boy's usefulness as a singer, is to produce a similar quality of tone and a uniform degree of force throughout the range of his voice. In order to produce this desired quality of tone and uniformity of force, the boy's voice must be subjected to an entirely different system of training from that ordinarily applied to the development of the female voice. Herein we perceive a leading principle which must be carefully borne in mind by the instructor of boy-choirs. The reason for this radically different method of dealing with the boy-voice is that the work done is usually a task of reconstruction, not of building upon a first foundation. Before the application of correct principles of vocal art to his case, he has in most cases unwittingly accustomed himself to certain incorrect usages of his most accessible tones, and the serious faults thus acquired must be entirely overcome by a special kind of training peculiar to his case. The strenuous life which the average American boy leads from cradle to long trousers, has endowed him with a forcible tone of speech and song which he emits with all the vigor of muscular power at his command. Baseball, football, wrestling, and singing are to him but so many ways of working off his sur-

plus energy and asserting the sturdy prerogatives of his masculinity. The spirit in which he sings a song is much the same as that in which he kicks a pig-skin or breaks a race-tape,—his main idea being to “win out.” In consequence, the exquisite voice with which he was gifted by nature has given place to a hoarse, strident, and even blatant voice which by careful methods of culture—proved invincible by widespread usage—must be restored to its pristine state of sweetness. The quiet domestic life of the average girl of the same age has fostered the best qualities of her voice and, generally speaking, the development of her voice requires no marked deviation from the conventional methods. A girl’s voice during girlhood cannot compare in charm of tonal beauty with the boy’s voice; it can never attain to “that indefinable something”—to quote Mr. J. Spencer Curwen, F.R.A.M.—which is inherent in the ideal boy-voice. The voice of the cantatrice is always personal; the boy’s voice scarcely ever so. And yet the impersonality of the boy’s voice is by no means the greatest of its charms. Its boundless upward range elicited from Caryl Florio the admiring eulogium, “There is no top to a boy’s voice.” The tribute which the eminent scholar and critic, Mr. H. E. Krehbiel, once paid the then famous Harry Brandon of New York, was couched thus: “He can soar into realms where few living *prime donne* can follow him, and his voice is so flexible that he sings the most florid music without difficulty.” We might multiply *ad infinitum* the encomiums which the boy-voice in its perfect state of culture has elicited from the votaries of music. We might quote the endless comparisons of the ideal boy-voice with the cultured female voice, in which the former has won by the contrast.

But we must now proceed without further preliminaries to the choir-room, which is to be the scene of future labors,

and where we are to meet the young lads who have been selected according to the principles enunciated in the first pages of this manual. Bearing in mind the fundamental distinctions between the methods of training the boy's and girl's voice respectively, we will now reduce to application the chief principles of training the former, which the best authorities, English, Continental, and American, advocate as the desideratum for successful practice.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TRAINING OF BOYS' VOICES.

THE training of the boys must be of two kinds,—vocal and technical. Let us first concern ourselves with the vocal training of the soprano-boys. Technical training will be considered in a further chapter.

The first step is to see that the tones of the scale are recognized and produced according to their proper pitch by each boy separately. The choirmaster will at once detect two entirely different methods of singing in the same pupil. Up to a certain point in the ascent of the scale, he will observe a coarse, heavy quality of tone, in the production of which, force and conscious effort are conspicuous. About that point—which varies with different boys—the voice is clear and of a flute-like character, enriched, in some exceptional instances, by a most desirable suggestion of horn-like quality. These higher tones are produced without effort, and so entirely different are they from the lower tones of the scale that it is difficult to believe that the different qualities of sound emanate from the same lad. Hereby is manifested the dual principle upon which every human voice in the abstract is constructed,—that is to say, its natural division into two general registers.

“A register,” says Emil Behnke, “consists of a series of tones which are produced by the same mechanism.” The two registers of the boy’s voice, respectively denominated the

head and *chest* registers, are commonly called in England, the *thin* and *thick* registers, these adjectives having reference to the quality of voice rather than to the placing of the tones. Some authorities term the high head-notes *upper thin*, and the chest notes, *lower thick*, thus making four registers; but as these two added registers are merely extensions of the two stated ones, head and chest, and as the same exercises are used in their development, they need not be separately considered.

If the average boy undertakes to sing without instruction, or after imperfect teaching, he will inevitably force his chest tones far up into the range of the head register. This forcing of the chest-tones produces a most unpleasant quality, and incidentally injures a voice.

Having discerned the break in a voice which occurs in singing an ascending scale, the choirmaster should now have his pupil descend the scale, commencing at F (fifth line). The break, as we may now call it, is soon in evidence again; but this time it occurs at a lower point in the scale. In this is revealed the vital point which should be borne in mind throughout the entire process of blending the registers.

The chest-voice cannot only be forced up into the domain of the head-voice, but the head-voice can be made to overlap the chest-voice in the descending scale.

By applying to all the members of the boys' section experiments similar to those outlined above, the choirmaster will discover the same characteristics existing among them all, though sometimes an exception is found. *Obviously, then, a boy is unfit for use in the choir until he has overcome the break between the registers.* Had he the voice of a seraph in his upper tones, he is useless as a chorister while his lower tones resemble those of an auctioneer. The purpose of scien-

tific training is apparent. By constant training only can the entire voice be brought into focus and made uniform in quality and degree of force. The voice of the individual chorister, and of the *ensemble*, must be treated upon definite and recognized principles of instruction. It is the purpose of this paper to indicate and emphasize some of the most important of these principles.

The elementary principles of correct practice are laid down by Dr. George Martin of St. Paul's Cathedral, London: "Boys should be taught to open the mouth properly, and never to sing with the teeth closed. The tongue must not be curled up, the tip slightly touching the lower teeth. Many masters enjoin an unnatural extension of the mouth in singing. The best plan is to make each boy place his thumb edgewise as far as the first joint. Then the mouth is opened in its natural position for singing. The thumb is then to be drawn gently away, leaving the teeth in the position they occupied when the thumb was between them. The head should be held erect and any tendency toward *throwing forward the chin* should be checked at once." Elsewhere he says: "The quality of tone produced by the boys in the practice-room, and by the whole choir combined, should be pure and free from harshness, and the enunciation as clear as possible. The shape of the resonance box formed by the hollow of the mouth materially affects the quality of the tone produced. The master should be careful to check all that kind of singing which is called 'throaty,' but which might be more accurately described as tonsillitic, and stop every form of nasal production."

The boys correspond readily with an intelligent system of instruction, and they soon learn to carry the thin register downward so as to include the notes in the vicinity of the "break." How then shall the choirmaster proceed to reduce the necessary instructions to a definite system?

He should bear in mind first of all, that the fundamental principles underlying the successful training of the boy's voice are,—(1) soft singing; (2) downward practice of scales. Commencing with F (fifth line), single tones should be sustained softly during a slow emission of breaths to the syllable "OO," and this process should be continued in chromatic intervals as far as the thin register can be made to descend. Returning then to high F, groups of three, four, and more tones in any descending form may be taken to the same syllable "OO." It will not be necessary to confine the practice of the higher tones of the thin register to downward progression only. That portion of the voice may be dealt with so as to add to it new upper tones; and as such tones are added, they should form the starting-point for the downward practice of exercises designed to conquer the break between the registers. The vowel sound "OO" is generally adopted as the basic syllable for the tone-practice of boys, as it tends to impart a mellow, flute-like character to the voice. Furthermore, it betrays at once any tendency toward nasal or throaty tone-production, so that such tendency may be corrected in its incipency. The advantage of using this vowel sound is increased by prefixing a consonant like K, or a combination like WH; these serve to project and "place" the vowel sound properly. "Having the necessary number of boys," writes Dr. Tozer, F.R.C.O., "I should then make them sing scales *downwards* to 'Koo,' and very easy diatonic intervals to the same syllable. They can never sing in the chest register, if taught to use *Koo* for their exercises. Strangle, at once, any attempt to sing *chest* notes above A (second space) and get them to carry the *head* voice quite low, say *E* or *D*. Never mind if the quality be poor (it is sure to be), it will develop. Give them no words to sing till they see for themselves the

difference between the right and wrong way of singing; then when they do sing words, take care that the notes belonging to them are produced in the 'head' or 'fluty' register."

For the purpose of gaining flexibility, "OO" and "AH" may be used alternately in moderately rapid passages, thus, commencing with F on the fifth line:

F G E G D G C etc.
 AH OO AH OO AH OO AH
 OO AH OO AH OO AH OO

Mr. Robert Louis Gannon, Choirmaster of the Mission Church (Redemptorist Fathers), Boston, secures excellent results in the way of fluency by the use of an exercise of this sort.

One important point to be kept in mind is that in practical choir singing, the soprano part must be of a tonal character which will blend consistently with the other parts. We have all heard "overtrained" boy-sopranos, where soullessness of voice is in evidence in spite of faultless production, and whose frigidity of tone is like the coldness of the polished marble shaft. The boy's voice has been called "*angelic*"; but it must be remembered that it has the essential characteristics of the *vox humana*. When it is blended with the active voices of a church choir, the vibrating string-like character should be in evidence in the soprano as well as in the deeper parts. Where this quality is lacking, the *ensemble* effect is much the same as that obtainable in an orchestra in which there are no violinists, the upper parts being assigned solely to flutes and light reed instruments.

I have endeavored to indicate the general scheme upon which the cultivation of the boy-voice must be based, if the choirmaster is to secure the best results. It is recommended,

however, that he familiarize himself with some established system of vocal exercises which have produced recognized results in choirs of international reputation. Dr. Martin's excellent book¹ should be in the hands of every boy-choir leader. This book embodies some exercises from the pen of Sir John Stainer, which for twenty years have been used daily in the famous choir at St. Paul's, London.

"The results derived from correct training," says Mr. Stubbs, "are many, but the most important may be summed up as follows:

"1. Beautiful timbre—a limpid, fluid quality, which causes a peculiar blending effect, making many voices sound as one.

"2. Extension of compass, bringing high notes within very easy reach.

"3. The total absence of the 'break.'

"4. Singing '*a capella*' without deviation from the pitch.

"5. Ability to sing for a long time without fatigue—the voices at the end of a three-hour service being as fresh as at the beginning.

"6. Longevity of the treble voice—the signs of mutation appearing in many cases after the age of seventeen."

Theoretically, the subject of proper breathing should be treated before that of tone-production; practically, in the case of boys, it should not be enlarged upon until after they have been taught once or twice to produce tones. But for the production of sustained notes a regular system of correct breathing must be taught in the first days of instruction. For exercise in breathing, we can do no better than quote again Dr. Martin:

"At the outset the boys must be made to stand in an upright

¹ Readers are referred to Chapter VII for a list of other valuable books on this subject.

position, both feet being firmly planted on the floor. During the breathing exercises the hands should be placed behind the back in as easy an attitude as possible, so as not to cramp the body in any way. The mouth must be slightly opened, and the air drawn gently in. When a full breath is taken, the chest, ribs, and abdomen must be enlarged and expanded. Any tendency to raise the shoulders must be considered a sign of bad breathing. Four slow beats should be counted during this process, and the breath should be taken slowly, silently, and very evenly. The breaths thus drawn must be carefully retained in the body without the slightest escape, while four is counted. Then with a strong effort of will and command of the muscles, the breath must be evenly and gradually expired while another four of equal measure is counted. Thus twelve beats will be used. Four to take breath, four to hold it, and four to let gently forth. . . . It is most important that the teacher should explain to the boys that considerable mental force is required to prevent the air from rushing out too quickly at the beginning of the process of expiration."

It is also most useful in breathing-exercises to have the lads stand with arms akimbo and palms of hands on the hips; this arrangement affords even greater freedom to the chest and abdominal muscles than when the hands are placed behind the back. At least five minutes of every rehearsal should be devoted to an exercise of this sort.

We have treated thus far of the training of the boy-sopranos. How does the choirmaster proceed with the altos? By precisely the same method, applied to a range of voice lower in the scale. The break in the alto-voice must be located, and with the application thereupon of the same method of treatment the boy-alto will develop a timbre of voice which will readily and beautifully blend with the flute-like quality of the sopranos.

The men, too, should be trained along some such definite

line of voice-culture as can be applied to them *en masse*, in sections, or as individuals. If they are young men, just beginning their musical career, they will appreciate such training, and it will go a long way toward securing their steady co-operation in choir-work. It is most desirable that the men should use their voices according to some fixed plan, and that there should not be left loose among them one individual with personal peculiarities in voice or tone production. We all know what harm one twangy, nasal tenor, or one chesty basso, can do even in reasonably large choirs. The boy-choir is no place for either of them. The purity of tone which the ideal choir of boys and men can and should attain to is, as it were, the clearness of crystal. Natural flaws of voice in the deeper parts can be largely corrected by the use of proper vocalizing, and choirmasters will do well to adapt any of the recognized methods of voice-production for tenors and basses to the use of the men of the choir.

CHAPTER X.

CURRENT VIEWS ON THE USE OF THE VOCAL REGISTERS.

WE come now to a much mooted question among choir-masters, and the distinguished authorities arrayed on each side of the question well indicate the force of the arguments which the supporter of each side can produce in favor of his contention. I refer to the two opposite ways of overcoming the *break* in the registers.

The first way is to smooth over the *break* by blending at that point the two registers of the voice, and subjecting the lower register to treatment which will greatly modify it, but by no means obliterate it. The other way is to eliminate *absolutely* the chest register, and to make the chorister use his thin register throughout the entire range of his voice. Let it be said at the outset that it is the conviction of the writers of this symposium that for the purposes of rendering our music the first of these methods is unquestionably the better. The difference of opinion has existed for many years, and is likely to last for many years to come.

Mr. G. Edward Stubbs emphatically claims superior results for choirs where the thin register is used exclusively. "The habitual use of the thin register," he writes, "throughout the entire vocal compass is looked upon by not a few voice-trainers as a 'fad,' encouraged and followed only by a few specialists. *That it embodies the old Italian method, practised for ages and ages by the choirmasters of Italy, and later*

*introduced into England, and still later defended in extenso by modern scientists, is a fact either unknown or ignored."*¹

The votaries of the head-voice system claim for it, that—

- (1) by singing only in the thin register "correct mechanism of the vocal organs is secured."
- (2) The *chest tones* of the boy-voice are the result of bad habits of speaking and singing.
- (3) Exclusive use of the head-register insures uniform, flute-like quality throughout the whole compass of the voice.
- (4) The process of blending the registers at a given point, in such a way that the fusion of them will be imperceptible, is too difficult a task for the average choir-master to undertake.
- (5) The head-voice is more flexible and lends itself more readily to florid passages which require rapid jumps from low to high notes.
- (6) The tendency to *lose the pitch* in unaccompanied music, is not met with so frequently in choirs where this system is the basis of the vocal instruction as in choirs where boys are permitted to sing with a qualified chest tone.

These, it appears to the present writer, are the chief arguments which can be alleged in favor of the total eradication of the thick-register voice. Readers are left to decide for themselves the truth and force of them.

In support of the other system, we quote a few words from the pen of Mr. Krehbiel; he is speaking of Mr. La Jeune, choirmaster of St. John's Chapel, New York:

"His method differs from that of the *majority*, in that he does

¹See *Practical Hints on the Training of Choir-Boys*—Revised edition, pp. 91 *seqq.*

not permit the use of the chest tones at all by the boys. This is not because he believes the chest tones of boys cannot be used effectively, but because he holds it is impossible to bridge over the break between the registers, in the three or four hours' study a week which the appropriation for choir purposes enables him to have. Mr. Messiter, of Trinity Church, holds decidedly to the opposite opinion, and on this mixed question there are nearly as many diverse views as there are choirmasters. As a rule, the practice is to train the head voice downward, and to prohibit the use of the chest tones above G on the second line of the treble staff. Those who, like Arthur E. Cook, of Calvary, split up the voice into more than two registers, believe also in cultivating the medium tones, on the ground that, while sweetness and purity of tone are gained by developing the head tones downward, *the singing of the choir trained on this plan will lack brilliancy.*"

It is presumed that this last statement refers to the complete absence of chest tones in training low notes on the head plan. Every authority advocates training downward. In fact, the downward plan, while permitting the use of the chest tone, at the same time gives the usually strident chest register a modified character which is apparent early in the training.

One important consideration which the Catholic choirmaster must take into account in settling for his own practice the merit of this question, is that the chorister must be fitted to sing the Gregorian Chant instead of music which has been especially written with reference to his paramount abilities, as is the case in the Anglican Church. The chant is of wide range and varied character, oftentimes calling for great virility of tone; the insipidity of a voice trained entirely in the head register would be entirely inadequate to the requirements. For example: the *Victimae Paschali* sung throughout in the thin register, supposing of course that the low notes could be thus reached, would lose its triumphant character. If this se-

quence is transposed to a pitch where it can be sung readily in the head register, the effect of such a passage as "Dic nobis Maria" and "Angelicae testes," the victorious character of the melody is lost in its trivial treatment. The effect would be something like that of bugle call to arms played upon fifes. The difficulty in this particular sequence could be obviated, it is true, by the particular phrases in question being given to *altos* or *basses*; but such solutions in the general rendering of the chant are not always practicable. The boy's voice must be trained to meet any emergencies in the chant.

To sum up. (1) According to Mr. Krehbiel, the majority of choirmasters advocate the retention of the chest register in a modified form. (2) For all practical purposes, a qualified chest tone seems indispensable in Catholic music.

Having decided to train the boys on this principle, choirmasters should take a method of dealing with the chest register which shall tend to free it from all symptoms of harshness and bridge over the break between the registers. Soft singing and downward practice of scales from a point in the thin register must be insisted upon. Choristers must be given individual practice. By application and patience and the exercise of ingenuity and invention to cover special cases the habit of singing smoothly over the break can be acquired. Before leaving the subject of tone-production it would be well to mention that, upon the attainment of proficiency in singing, the general practice need not be confined exclusively to downward progressions, although this should still be the prevailing method.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TECHNICAL TRAINING OF THE CHOIR.

WE shall consider, in this chapter, the training of the choir-members in such of the theoretical principles as are necessary to them.

First, a certain amount of technical training is absolutely indispensable. This must be taken as final, for although the correct vocal training of the singers, and particularly of the boys, is of greater importance, yet a choir that has not been thoroughly grounded in the fundamentals of musical theory will be always unreliable; never sure, never accurate.

The disadvantages of working with a "*catch as can*" choir, a choir that sings by ear, and not by note, are many:

- (a) Much valuable time is wasted in learning new pieces;
- (b) The repertoire will be greatly limited, because a considerable portion of excellent church music is too difficult for such a choir to attempt;
- (c) The singers have not the necessary independence, inasmuch as they must trust to their ears to suggest the the correct note at the correct time; disastrous "breaks" are liable to occur at almost any moment;
- (d) "Attack" is often tentative and weak;
- (e) An infinite amount of energy is unnecessarily expended by the choirmaster; both in teaching the choir, and in leading it at services.

On the other hand, a choir that can read music fluently, and interpret readily the various musical signs, can aim at learning the most difficult music. Fugues have no terrors for

such a choir; the more complicated the counterpoint, and the more elaborate the figure, the more vigorous and enthusiastic will be the rendition. Such a choir can easily acquire a repertoire which will allow a pleasing variety in the music sung. It can give intelligent expression to movements where an ill-trained choir would be at sea; it can sing polyphony with an easy flow, and accurately; in a word, it has many advantages over an insufficiently educated choir.

The writer has attended many rehearsals of a well-known Catholic chancel-choir in this country. Every visit to the practice-room of this choir brings a new revelation of the fluency of both the boys and the men in reading at sight from the Gregorian, modern, and a modified form of the Tonic-solfa notations. The choirmaster spends a part of each rehearsal in practising sight-singing, and the result is that the most difficult fugal compositions, and the most florid chants are regularly rendered with incredibly little effort. At each rehearsal, a portion of the practice-time should be devoted to *theory*. Choirmasters will find that they can dispense with instruction in theory only at their ultimate inconvenience. Fifteen minutes in an hour's practice is not too much time to spend in sight-reading. The reading not only of modern music, but also of Gregorian Chant, must be studied and mastered. The rudiments of modern music must be studied until each chorister is thoroughly acquainted with them. He should be able to name all notes in all of the lines and spaces, and some of the leger lines, with their accidentals, and to explain the various time-values. He should be familiar with the signatures of the different keys, and he should understand the various marks of expression.

"A good choir, men and boys," writes Dr. Martin, "ought to be able to read ordinary music at sight. It ought not to

be necessary to try pieces of moderately difficult music many times before making it as perfect as circumstances will permit. The blackboard should be in constant use, and at first, at each lesson, the scale of C major should be written out, and the boys requested to sing any note pointed out by the teacher. This should form part of every lesson. Later on, other scales may be taken and accidentals introduced. Another most useful exercise is to distribute a collection of chants, single and double, and sing them through in consecutive order, the teacher explaining the new scale to the pupils when necessary; but to do this with any success, considerable advance must have been made in the theory of music."

A good method for learning to read modern music at sight should be introduced. Tuft's method is an ideal one, thorough, and easy of comprehension. It is founded upon the *movable Do* system, by which each scale commences with *Do*. The lessons are deftly arranged, and the progress of the boys in assimilating them is remarkable. The system founded upon the *fixed Do* is most unsatisfactory. It has always proved a great task to teach boys to commence a new scale on a different sound, thus: *C* scale on *Do*, *D* scale on *Re*, *G* scale on *Sol*, etc. As a matter of fact, every scale is structurally identical. If *C* on a piano is tuned up to *D*, and every succeeding note accordingly, a perfect *D* scale will be heard. This is where the movable *Do* makes sight-singing easy. Every new scale starts on *Do*, and the perfect uniformity of the diatonic scale-intervals is impressed on the boy's mind without conscious effort on his part.

Dr. J. Varley Roberts, of Magdalen College, Oxford, agrees that: "1. The best method is that called the 'movable Do'; that is, to make 'Do' the tonic or keynote of the music sung in any particular key. Modulations should be explained on

the blackboard. When a transition into a new key takes place, then the tonic of such new key should of course become the 'Do.'

"2. If boys have been taught the tonic-solfa system in school it is all the better for the choirmaster, as the knowledge of scales, intervals, modulation, etc., obtained by this method can be applied to the system of notation.

"3. The system of a fixed 'Do,' i. e., always assigning the note C as *the* 'Do,' is altogether a wrong one (for many obvious reasons), and can lead to no satisfactory result."

The movable *Do* will also facilitate the reading of the chant in which the position of the notes on the staff is relative.

It is exceedingly unfortunate that in some quarters the necessity is thought to exist for editions of the liturgical books in modern instead of Gregorian notation. While such editions are designed to facilitate the ready reading of the Chant, it is to be feared that they preclude any rational interpretation of its spirit and rhythm as indicated in the original notation. The staff, notes, and clefs of the latter are not at all formidable. Probably the chief fancied obstacle to its easy mastery is the fact that the pitch of the notes indicated thereby is relative instead of absolute. But if so, the books in modern notation do not relieve this difficulty in the slightest degree, for in them each Chant composition is reduced to the natural scale of C, which the organist must customarily transpose into a key suited to the compass of the voices. The disposition of the Gregorian melody into a convenient vocal range is quite as elementary a matter as the transposition from the scale of C into another determined scale. Several very serious difficulties are involved in the use of this unsatisfactory expedient of modern notation, by which the general musical efficiency of organist and singers is bound to be jeopardized to

some extent; for it is hardly to be supposed that professional musicians are going to confine the entire extent of their musical activities to the one art form of Gregorian Chant. I refer, first, to the unwise and detrimental tampering with the sense of absolute pitch, rare enough at best, which is involved in habitual transposition from one determined key to another; whereas, the pitch of the notes on the Gregorian staff is relative only. I next allude to the annihilation of the sense of positive *tempo* which must follow the use of quarter and eighth notes which, at the same time, are not to be considered as such, but treated rather according to the free rhythm of the Chant. As a still further complication, some of the Tournai books in modern musical characters contain dots over the music of the accented syllable or word in order to indicate emphasis. The dot is the same as that used to indicate *staccato* in modern music, which term bears a very different signification. Metronome marks are also used sometimes presumably to indicate a standard of speed, but as the Chant is without determined *tempo*, the metronome marks but add to the general confusedness. A church choir, however much an easy or "royal road to learning" may seem to be desirable to them, should by no means be subjected to the necessity of such mental contortions as are consequent upon the use of a makeshift notation which is supposed to mean one thing for this and another thing for that. The pliant and mellifluous character of the Chant, as properly interpreted from the Gregorian staff, is in great contrast with the stilted and labored production which can hardly be avoided when it is delineated by means of this incongruous attempt at a modern notation which confounds the significance of its various tokens.

The Reverend clergy would do well to consider these points, and in giving their orders for the new liturgical books, see to it that they obtain the real chant notation for their choirs.

CHAPTER XII.

REHEARSALS.

PROPER facilities must be provided for regular practice. The choir-room should be kept sacred for choir purposes, so that it may be accessible at all times. The choir should not be expected to have quarters with Sodalities and Leagues, not to mention sewing-classes and the Altar Society. The appointment of rehearsals should never depend upon whether the room is previously occupied by the St. Vincent de Paul Society or the Church Debt Association. The conscientious choirmaster will be obliged to make many appointments for personal practice, at all sorts of hours, and the scene of action should be always available to his purpose.

The piano should be one with horizontal strings, either grand or square, so that the choirmaster can sit facing the choir with an unimpeded view. The benches should be comfortable, but not conducive to lounging, and they should be arranged as nearly as possible according to the plan of the choir-stalls in the sanctuary. A blackboard with white lines, or better, a white board with black lines for the musical staff, should occupy a commanding position. It would add to the general musical effect if a few pictures representing musical subjects, for instance St. Cecilia, or some of the great composers, could hang on the walls. The cassocks and surplices of the members should hang in lockers built along the sides of the room. This would centralize the choir equipment, and would avoid the confusion which would inevitably result from

mutual accommodation for choir and altar boys. A closet for books and music should be provided in the choir-hall, and some regular method for keeping the music in repair devised. The choirmaster will find it convenient to appoint as librarians certain reliable boys whose duty it shall be to distribute and gather up the music, and see that it does not become worn beyond chance of repair.

As to the number of rehearsals, if the best quality of work is desired, from four to six hours a week for the boys, and two or three hours a week for the men is none too much. The boys should be rehearsed one hour on each of the five school days, then allowing them an absolute holiday. When the boys attend the parochial school, an arrangement between pastor, teachers, and choirmaster should be made by which a part of the rehearsal can come out of the class hours. One of the great aims of the school boy is to "get out of class," and he would gladly hew wood or carry water to attain this end. It has been abundantly proved that in a choir practice the best work is done in that portion of the hour when the lads have the satisfaction of knowing that they are out of class while their classmates are "grinding." The time between the closing of school and twilight is naturally given but grudgingly by the boys. Such an arrangement as I have just suggested might entail an extra degree of management upon the school Sisters, but they are ever susceptible to the inspiration "*ad majorem Dei Gloriam*." The men of the choir should have at least two rehearsals a week; and on Friday night of each week there should be a full rehearsal of boys and men; this is considered to be the best night for the general practice, for it is sufficiently late in the week to admit of gathering up the results of the previous days' rehearsals, and preparing them for the Sunday which is to follow. The singing on Sunday will

be characterized by all the greater freshness and spontaneity on account of the previous day's rest. Where the boys are not taken from the parochial school, it is not easy to hold the rehearsals so frequently. But there should not be fewer than three rehearsals a week for the boys, one for the men, and one general practice for all together. It would be a folly to hope for good results if less time than this were devoted to practice.

"Our rehearsal-time is unfortunately too short," writes Mr. Bellenot of St. Sulpice, "*about an hour or three-quarters of an hour daily*—when there is no morning office to be sung. It consists of sustained tones and vocalizations, etc."

"A great many people," says Dr. Martin, "suppose that all the children of the choirs of various cathedrals sing well because they possess excellent voices. This is a mistake. Almost all the charming quality of vocal tone observed in the choirs of cathedrals is acquired in the practice-room. . . . It is the *regular* training obtained in the practice-room . . . which produces the result so much admired and so worthy of admiration. The choirmaster who would attain a like effect must resort to like means."

Our consideration as to the amount of time to be devoted to choir-practice can best be concluded in the words of A. Madeley Richardson, Mus. Doc., F.R.C.O.: "To carry his work to a successful issue, the choirmaster must have ample time and know how to put it to the best use. An hour a day with perhaps one day a week as a holiday, is a reasonable amount of time to devote to choir-work with boys. If this time is used to the best advantage, it will be productive of great benefit to the boys, and will give possibilities of raising their singing to a very high level."

The question is often raised, "How long a time must neces-

sarily elapse between the organization of a choir and its installation in the sanctuary?" Three months is the minimum of time required for the proper preparation. Six months would be more reasonable, and one full year is to be highly recommended. Of course, many pastors are so situated that the solution of this question is thrust suddenly upon them and in such manner that it must be solved by the first means which come to hand. But in places where the former choir of mixed voices is suddenly disbanded, and the liturgical choir is not yet ready for a public appearance, the pastors would do well to have Low Mass, or to engage a temporary unison choir of three or four men. If a sanctuary choir starts upon its career in a crude, unfinished state, it will lay up for itself the criticism and opposition of many years to come. If, on the contrary, it enters upon the performance of its functions in a condition of thorough fitness, its success is infallibly ensured.

The prudent pastor, in this regard, is he who, reading the signs of the times, and observing the straws which indicate how the wind blows, at once sets about preparing a chancel-choir. If he commences intelligently and permits himself a full year for preparation, there is no doubt but that the new liturgical choir will enter upon its career in such manner as abundantly to vindicate its installation and to win the approval of all interested.

The best mode of procedure in the rehearsal room, which has come under the notice of the writer, is given by Dr. Tozer, of London:

"Never 'nag' a choir, or poke fun at individual members. If any one member is at fault, speak of the *part* to which he belongs, and not of the individual himself, as being so. Make faultfinding *general*, and often include one's self: *e. g.*, 'We were not

right on such a point.' Maintain your dignity, but without any absurd haughtiness. After a rehearsal is over, mix naturally with your members, and take an interest in some of their concerns, outside the mere choir work: *e. g.*, their trades, professions, families, etc. A question or two on these things shows the *friend*, after you have dropped the *official*.

"At a practice, get everything you want ready before you begin. All music should be on the desks before a note is sung. Have a list prepared beforehand of all you will want. Give it to your librarian, whose duty it will be to see that it is properly attended to. Let him begin at the bottom of the list; then the music you want first at the rehearsal will be uppermost on the desk.

"When practising, discourage desultory conversation. If you hear it, say firmly, but quite nicely: 'Kindly allow *me* to do the talking, and *you* do the singing.'

"A short break every fifteen or twenty minutes is useful to keep the voices from getting tired. Go straight on with the various items you have on your list without any 'waits' (except as above); it maintains keenness and makes a choir alert.

"Find places quickly and quietly, and on Sundays always have a service list with everything written down in proper order and precisely. One list to every two members prevents all discussion.

"In correcting errors, do not correct everything as it occurs, if the slips are comparatively unimportant. Take a page or two at a time. Memorize the errors and point them out; show how the passages ought to be sung, and begin again.

"If the choirmaster is organist also, let him show how he *suggests* an effect on the organ by his manner of playing; tell the singers always to keep an ear for this. He can suggest quietly a certain method of rendering a passage which they will catch at once if they understand him.

"Tell them you can hear them in *pianissimo* passages, when perhaps they cannot hear your accompaniment; that being so, they must not get into a state of panic. They should keep singing just the same, knowing that you are at the helm to avert any disaster, should one be imminent."

PART III.

THE PLACE OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL MUSIC
AMONG THE ARTS.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GREGORIAN CHANT.

THE pontificate of our present Holy Father, Pope Pius X, has marked a most important era in the history of Church music. The regulations which have been proposed for many centuries by Popes, Councils, and Decrees of the Sacred Congregation have been epitomized and enjoined by the reigning Pontiff in such fine detail of distinction that there is no room for irregularity of practice on any ground, whether of misunderstanding of his inculcations or an assumption of disability generally to carry out the same. The characteristic of Church music as a distinctively ecclesiastical art has been made evident, and we are now bound to conform our practice to the rules of the Church and confine ourselves to a repertoire which is legitimate under the legislation which authority has propounded. The principle governing both the selection of our singers and of the music which they are to sing having thus been made a forensic one, those placed in charge of choirs have no choice in the premises but to conduct themselves accordingly and work for results. Of them, there is no reason to be apprehensive.

It should be understood from the start that the music now declared authoritative is of the supremest order of excellence and capable of the highest artistic development. Not less than by reason of its liturgical appropriateness, has it been selected from the enormous musical product of the Christian era by the corresponding reason of its inherent beauty. Mastered by

the well educated choir of male voices, the musical offering cannot only square with the legislation concerning it, but it is abundantly replete with artistic possibilities commensurate with, and infinitely superior for its purpose to the standard heretofore furnished by the familiar mixed choir of male and female voices now abrogated by authority.

Church music may be divided into three general classifications,—(1) the Gregorian Chant, (2) the classic polyphonic music of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and (3) music composed in modern times and according to the general rules of modern style, but within the lines laid down by the specifications of the *Motu proprio* of November 22, 1903.

It is clearly evident, upon a careful study of the *Motu proprio* in its various sections, that a most palpable object of its insistence is the restoration of the Gregorian Chant. Its common employment for both ordinary and extraordinary purposes is positively assumed, and not only is much of the particularization which follows clearly based only upon the postulate that the directions therein contained shall be unquestionably obeyed, but it is utterly incapable of interpretation except upon this theory. This point is so obvious as to be beyond all dispute. No evasion or circumlocution can explain or modify one phrase of the *Motu proprio* into a less positive construction. As certainly as women are dismissed from the choir, and boys ordered in their places by the Chief Pastor himself, so certainly is the customary use of the Gregorian Chant made obligatory. Even in such authorization as is given to other styles of music, the following rule is laid down: "The more closely a composition for Church approaches in its movement, inspiration, and savor the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy is it of the Temple."

It would seem to the purpose that we should thus dwell for a brief pause, not so much upon the superlative excellence of the Chant as sung by male voices, as upon the peremptoriness and far-reaching character of the mandate concerning it.

To many, and certainly to those in authority, it is evident that the retirement of women from the choir and the restoration in ordinary practice of the Chant are the two necessary exactions, by the enforcement of which our Church music is to be delivered from the utter secularization and corruption which have long threatened it, although to others of equal candor these requirements would seem to constitute serious difficulties which are to be deplored, but not wantonly controverted.

As to the obligation by which those in charge of Church music are to provide that Plain Chant is to be made the first consideration of repertory, both its ethics and legal force require that the singers should not neglect a thorough study of of the Chant for any purpose whatever. In other words, until such time as the various Masses and the Office of Vespers or Compline can be sung to the Chant prescribed by the liturgical books, the choir should not experiment in modern music to any considerable, and most certainly not to a disproportionate, extent. It is a short-sighted and erroneous idea to imagine that a smattering of the Chant will suffice for the new choir, while its principal efforts can be expended in work which indulges a modern taste and involves greater display. Display and the self-consciousness of which it is begotten, are the very things to be most studiously avoided in the choir. The exclusion of women is an important step toward this desirable consummation, and the use of Gregorian Chant, which accentuates the solemnity of the sacred rite rather than the exploitations of the singers, is a corresponding check upon any tendency toward ostentation. With the distinct understanding,

therefore, that the *Motu proprio* means exactly what it says on the subject of Gregorian Chant, we shall do well to devote a short space to a *résumé* of its venerable origin.

The Gregorian Chant, or *Roman Choràl*, as it is also properly called, is of composite derivation. It is, primarily, the metamorphosis of the musical system which prevailed among the Greeks in the halcyon days when Hellenic art was in its glorious ascendancy. The Grecian music, traceable itself to remote Egyptian and Phœnician origin, reached its highest development in the renowned days of the classic drama. Adopted with qualifications by the Romans also, though never so assiduously cultivated by them, it represents the state of artistic culture which music had attained at the dawning of the Christian era. Of a character suited to the demands of the magnificent drama which was produced on a scale of august stateliness surpassing the dreams of the most enthusiastic visionary of our times, its virility withstood the decline and disruption of the transitional period and, regenerated and transformed, it blossomed forth anew in the garden of Christian art. Together with the system of music derived from the Greeks, remnants of the Hebrew temple music, particularly of the Psalms, were incorporated into Christian worship by early Jewish converts. Of course, it is not to be understood that Christian music fashioned itself definitely according to the Modes of the Greeks and Romans or the chant of the Hebrews, but that, taking into account the disintegration and demolition which ensued upon the decadence of Greek and Roman art and the various conditions attendant upon the assimilation of Judaism into the new religion, the general scheme of Christian music was naturally based upon these two existent types.

We need not dwell longer upon the origin of the *cantus* of

the Church, nor need we consider the enlargement of its scope and unfolding of its genius as Christianity emerged from the period of persecution. Its further history through the revisions of the Ambrosian and Gregorian epochs, and the later compilations of the liturgical books of various periods, are matters well known to the student. The last signal culmination of its progress up to the accession of the present Pope was the issuance of the famous Ratisbon edition of the Chant during the pontificate of Pope Pius IX, and its publication by Messrs. Pustet & Co. under a thirty years' *privilegium* which lasted through the reign of Pope Leo XIII and expired but last year. Meanwhile, an exhaustive archæological research into original and authentic forms of the Chant which had been undertaken and long pursued by the Benedictines of Solesmes, produced results of advanced scholastic perfection, and the publications of the Solesmes Chant from the presses of Messrs. Desclée, Lefebvre & Co., Tournai, Belgium, presented a serious claim to the recognition of the Church. Pope Pius X, convinced that the Solesmes version of the Chant represents the most accurate and ideal form of the same, has promulgated this result of the profound erudition of the Benedictines as the official Chant for the use of the Catholic world. As a final precaution and guarantee of its authenticity, he has ordered its most scrupulous revision and issuance from the Vatican presses. It is understood that the new liturgical books will be forthcoming at an early date, and that the former publishers of the Solesmes Benedictines at Tournai have been granted the privilege of issuing duplicate editions. The prices will not be prohibitive, and every means will be taken for the thorough dissemination of this revised edition of Plain Chant, which will form the basis for the Gregorian restoration now inaugurated by the Holy See.

It is an error to assume that the technical study of the Chant on the part of the choirmaster who is well grounded in the modern musical system, is such a very complex matter. The intervals of the different Gregorian Modes are represented in the diatonic scale plus *b flat*, and while the choirmaster should most certainly understand the formation and relation of the Modes, the process of their study by no means implies that in the execution of the Chant he should eliminate the modern scale from his mind, and revise, almost to the point of complete inversion, his ordinary habits of musical thought. On the contrary, the modern natural scale, constituting as it does the fixed order of diatonic sound sequence, (permitting, of course, as in Plain Chant, the use of *Si flat* in order to avoid the augmented fourth or *tritonus*), serves him as the standard melodic *norma* upon which he can locate the successive tones according to their modal progression.

In another chapter will be found suggestions as to means by which the choirmaster can properly undertake the technical study of the Chant. The singers can be spared much of such technical study and interpret the Chant more in accordance with the principles which they would apply to music composed agreeably to modern rules.

We now arrive at a question which should be thoroughly pondered, and determined only upon a careful weighing of the forcible arguments which are adduced by theorists whose convictions upon the subject differ. Is it permitted, in singing Plain Chant, to deviate at times from the unisonal character which is at the basis of its fabric and spirit and, for the expression of an extraordinary degree of musical sentiment, to break forth into vocal harmony? Notwithstanding opinions to the contrary and a consistent practice to that effect by many of the most prominent votaries of the Chant, it is our decided

conviction that within such limits as are generally conceded to the principles of organ accompaniment to the Chant, its harmonization for voices is permitted and at times advisable. The principle which once admits the harmonized organ accompaniment to the Chant admits also its vocal harmonization. It is true indeed that the Chant was not harmonized in its early days. And why? Because any such thing as a concordant relation of sounds was unheard-of. But as soon as there arose those who could effect anything like a consonance of tones, the attempt was made. Hucbald's clumsy *Organum* of the tenth century, and the more pretentious *discant*, or *diaphonia*, *triaphonia*, etc., which followed it in the twelfth century, were attempts in this direction. The *falsi bordoni* to which Mr. W. S. Rockstro upon clear evidence ascribes a date a full century and a half before that between 1305 and 1377, which is usually assigned, was the next accomplishment of note in this regard. The Gregorian melody upon which all these manipulations of concordant parts were based, remained as an immutable voice part, and was designated as the *cantus firmus*. The contrapuntists of the Palestrina school based their colossal masterpieces upon Gregorian themes and reduced such themes to definite rhythm for that purpose, and we submit that a fixed rhythm to the Chant is quite as opposed to the early conception of it as is a harmonization of it. In all of these achievements of note, in which such stupendous results were evolved from early and almost barbarous approximations, we discern a principle of blending, rather than confusion of art forms, upon which we consider ourselves justified in defending a legitimate harmonization of the Chant for voices. We are well aware that there is thus propounded a principle which is capable of abuse. But we do not believe that any possible trifling with such a privilege upon the part

of the incompetent can possibly be so detrimental to the ultimate success of the Gregorian restoration as would be the attempt, for the sake of strict interpretations which we do not consider altogether warranted, to repress entirely the innate tendency of our singers toward "singing in parts." It is to be seriously feared that the choirmaster who endeavors, for the sake of an academical and pedantic principle, to train the average American choir along strictly uncompromising unisonal lines, would soon be confronted by the threatened dispersion of his singers, and perhaps experience the collapse of his own enthusiasm. In further suggestions as to the practical teaching of the choir, it will be assumed, conformably to our theories upon the permissibility of vocal harmonization, that it is to be allowed. We must be prudent in this regard, however, and avoid the chromatic treatment which we ordinarily apply in harmonizing modern melody.

The organ accompaniment to the Chant constitutes a large subject which can be treated intelligibly only in detail and in a volume devoted primarily to it. Its general principles are well summed up in the appendix to the *Magister Choralis*. The matter is well expounded and illustrated in the writings of Witt, Haller, Beltjens, Piel, Mettenleiter and Oberhoffer. Messrs. Novello, Ewer & Co. are about to issue a treatise on Gregorian accompaniment by Louis Niedermeyer and Joseph d'Ortigue, the latter of whom is the chairman of the Paris Liturgical Commission. It is translated into English by Mr. Wallace Goodrich and should prove a useful volume.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW TO TEACH THE GREGORIAN CHANT.

WE should now proceed to a formulation of a practical method by which the choir shall commence its study of Gregorian Chant compositions. The section of the *concentus* of the Mass designated in the books of the Liturgy as the *Cantus Ordinarii Missae* should first claim our attention. While the Church prescribes a special Mass according to the liturgical rank of the day upon which it is to be sung, with the provision of certain Masses which may be sung *ad libitum*, it is unavoidable that, at the start, the Masses must be sung as they can be learned rather than as they may be required. Assuming that we are first arranging the preparation of two alternate Masses, let us commence with the Mass for ordinary Sundays within the year (*Orbis Factor*) and the first Mass for Double Feasts (*Cunctipotens Genitor Deus*). These standard Masses will furnish a most practical introduction to the beauties of Plain Chant. It would be well, at the same time, to have a section, or two, three, or four alternating sections of the full choir (boys only, if more practicable), prepare the *Missa pro defunctis* for use as occasion may require. After the acquirement of these Masses, it will be found an easy matter to add the other Chant Masses, one at a time, in the order which shall suggest itself to the choirmaster, who by this time should be getting well into touch with the new order of things. It is doubtless the intention of the Church,

and it is the custom of cathedrals and churches of note, generally, to sing one Mass complete, rather than the *Kyrie eleison* from one Mass, the *Credo* from another, etc. This rule should be adhered to, except in cases of such necessities as may naturally arise in the unripe stages of the choir's growth.

What special treatment can be given to the musical production of the Gregorian Masses in order that they may be sung with the highest religious and artistic effect? In the first place, we must remember that they lose nothing of their solemnity and suitability for purposes of worship, if they are sung strictly in unison. Here again we must remember that unison singing does not mean the singing of a given melody by boys and men together; that is singing in octaves, on account of the difference of eight tones in pitch. Such octave singing is all right at times, but a little of it goes a long way. Unisonal treatment of Masses, or sections of Masses, would require that the trebles and deeper voices should sing separate sections. By thus alternating, and the use of an occasional octave passage, a varied interpretation can be secured. This principle of alternation should be made free use of, where the assortment of voices permits. In many Masses, particularly in the two named herein, there is possibility for beautiful effects in alternating contrasts of unison and varied harmony, with due regard for shading and expression. Gradations of tone from the softest *piano* to the *fortissimo* of the musical climax; full chorus; the succession of movements in unison for boys' voices followed by others in four-part harmony; movements in unison for mens' voices succeeded by such a solo passage or "melodic projection" as is allowed by the *Motu proprio*, followed yet again by sections in four, or less than four, or, as far as the capabilities of the choir and the construction of the music permit,—of more than four-part harmony; trio or quartette

sentences, and grand chorus again,—all these illustrations indicate how the capable choirmaster can so treat a Chant composition that it will be a revelation of beauty. Of course, in choirs lacking the proper balance of voices, these varying effects cannot be secured, and during the early progress of the Chant instauration, it may be generally necessary to render Church music in more plain and severe style than may be aimed at for the future, when the new order of things is held better in hand.

While the first Masses are being studied, the responses should be thoroughly learned, including the answers in various Modes to *Ite missa est* and *Benedicamus Domino*. Both the plainer responses, and the majestic responses at the *Canon*, can be harmonized, and the latter particularly can be shaded and finished to a degree which will prove truly uplifting and inspiring.

The *Proprium de Tempore* is, on account of its elaborateness, the most serious difficulty the choir has to face. From the outset, the choir must take no liberties with the sacred text of the Liturgy. It must be sung, every word of it, and, if possible, to the proper Chant melody. If this simply cannot be done, some temporary expedient must be resorted to until it can be accomplished. The singing of the Proper *recto tono* or to the Psalm-tone of the Modes in which its specified parts may be written, is not the ideal way, but it is far better to sing it thus than to leave out the words, which latter alternative is simply out of the question. As the ability of the choir comes to correspond more closely to the demands made upon it, special parts of the correct melodies of the Proper should be regularly mastered,—for instance, those of the Introits, Alleluias, and Jubilations, and so on until it is possible to sing them in entirety. Perhaps it would be well at first to con-

fine the singing of the Proper to some six singers, more or less, who need sing none of the other music. This will give opportunity for more thorough and special rehearsal, and guarantee a successful musical rendering of this important portion of the Mass until such time as the choir has become proficient and able to sing it according to its exact notation.

In teaching the choir to sing the liturgical Vespers, it will be found necessary to remember that Vespers rendered in choir is a very different service from the usual inexact evening function which we have been accustomed ordinarily to call by that name. With the installation of the choir in the chancel, it will be possible to start at once with both the prescribed music and ceremonies.¹ With the proper division of the choir into antiphonarians, cantors, and chorus, each chorister has his definite work to do, and the Office assumes the character of symmetry and completeness contemplated by the Church. The Psalms should be chanted, not by verses alternating in solo and chorus, but in the antiphonal style,—that is, from one side of the choir to the other, if the choir is seated on both sides of the chancel, or from one section to another, if it is grouped on one side. The Antiphons to the Psalms are very similar throughout the year, and they are particularly interesting, as they represent one of the very earliest developments of Chant composition. If it is not feasible at first to sing them to the assigned melodies, they may be recited *recto tono*. If the Reverend Clergy assert the privilege of the celebrant at Vespers to intone the Antiphons to the first Psalm and *Magnificat* (his intonation of the first line of the Hymn is of course also understood), they can at once place the singing of the Antiphons on a determined status and

¹ Consult Martinucci, Volume II.

ensure study of them by those who are appointed to sing them. The Hymns and *Versiculi* must be sung, and great will be the spiritual edification of our Catholic people as this thesaurus of hymnody becomes familiar to their ears. The hymns are in the four classic metres, iambic, trochaic, sapphic and asclepiadic. The melodies are not difficult,—indeed, they are peculiarly attractive. After following them through the course of a year, they are easily retained in mind and associated with the particular festival or season with which they are identified. If the task of preparing them regularly is found impossible at first, suitable grave tunes may be selected from more modern sources to which several hymns of similar metrical construction may be sung. If it be objected that the suggestions of this chapter admit, as in the case of the Proper of the Mass, and the Antiphons and Hymns of Vespers, a too marked deviation from the prescribed Chant form—we are speaking now only of the accumulation of a Chant repertoire, not upon the permissibility of modern music as such, upon which we shall dwell later—it may be said that such concessions are suggested only for the first one, two, or three years, or until the choir has attained to a state of advancement which will admit of its adherence to the standard melodies. Much of the existing prejudice against the Chant has undoubtedly been provoked by the rude and unskilful attempts which have often been made toward its production, and the choir will accomplish far more in the end by endeavoring, at this juncture, to do part of it well than all of it badly.

We have now arrived at the principal point of Vespers. The Psalmody of the Old Law has merged into the Canticle of the New Law. The prophecy of the *Dixit Dominus* is fulfilled in the *Magnificat*. The words of Holy Mary ascend, while priest and people “magnify the Lord” with the Virgin Mother

through whom salvation was bestowed upon mankind. The promise to our father Abraham is commemorated, and the new covenant of grace is proclaimed. The ritual culminates at this point. The priest and sacred ministers offer incense at the altar, and the chant assumes a new solemnity as, with enhanced tone, the salvation of Israel is announced in the words of her whose "*fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*" caused to dawn the joyful day of the world's Redemption. The choir should certainly distinguish between the method of rendering the Psalmody and that of chanting the *Magnificat*. The tones of the Psalms are given specially elaborated forms when assigned to the *Magnificat*, and these forms should never yield to the relative plainness of the Psalm tone. A treatment of the *Magnificat* in alternating unison and harmony, with effects of shading and color corresponding to those suggested for a similar rendition of Chant Masses, can be brought to bear with solemn and sublime effect upon its rendering.

The musical responses which follow, and the answers to the Orations and Commemorations should be treated with care, and it would not be amiss to harmonize them.

One of the four Anthems of the Blessed Virgin, according to the season, is now sung. The Solesmes Chant affords both a *cantus sollemnis* and *cantus ferialis* for these masterworks of religious praise. The Chant melodies should be scrupulously studied. They are beautiful productions, and upon their recurrence year after year they will surely obtain a tenacious hold upon the minds and hearts of those who sing and listen to them, particularly so when we consider some of the execrable settings of them which have flourished in the days of back-gallery pre-eminence, and which, alas! are echoing yet. Before Benediction, a motet can be sung in modern style, if so desired. This will be referred to later, under another classi-

fication. The *Tantum ergo* at Benediction should be of a deeply religious character, and sung "after the traditional form of the hymn." This is made the subject of a special order in the *Motu proprio*. The Gregorian melodies are far better suited to this supreme act of adoration by which the day's worship is brought formally to a close, than modern settings of the hymn. There are many exquisite selections in Plain Chant which can be used after the *Offertorium* at High Mass or as Benediction motets, which are capable of rich musical interpretation, and these should be made the most of for their purpose. As examples, we may note *Rorate coeli*, for Advent; *Adeste fideles*, for Christmas; *Attende Domine* and *Parce Domine*, for Lent; *Adore Te devote*, *Panis angélicus*, etc., for general use at Benediction. The Litany of the B. V. M. should also be learned and sung in Plain Chant. The greater part of the modern settings to the Litany so mutilate its text that it is doubtful, to say the least, if they are entitled to the prescribed indulgences. In fact, the popular settings of the Litany in which *ora pro nobis* is sung not after each title, but after groups of three titles, were quite recently declared unindulged.

It is suggested that where the singing of Vespers is not possible, the Office of Compline, on account of its practical unchangeableness, could be learned and rendered with less difficulty than Vespers.

A choir which has reached the stage where High Mass and Vespers can be well rendered in the manner above suggested, has conquered the most difficult obstacles of its career. The repertoire already mastered should be faithfully kept up, and additions should be made to the same as opportunity allows. All of the liturgical Masses should be learned, in order that certain of the Masses may not regularly be used *ad libitum*

for festivals which have special Masses assigned to them. The Proper of the Mass as well as the Antiphons and Hymns of Vespers, should, as soon as possible, be brought to the state of perfection indicated in the books of the Liturgy. All solemn Offices, such as those for Holy Week, should be fittingly rendered as they occur. The amateur choir should not soar to heights above its ability, nor should the skilled choir become so interested in exploiting musical effects as to deem the slightest inflection of Chant of small importance. The music of worship must be so produced that its impersonal character and musical excellence shall be ever in evidence. It is the expressed command of the Holy Father that the music should be "good in itself," and also that it should be "adapted to the power of the singers and always well executed."

CHAPTER XV.

THE CLASSIC POLYPHONY.

WHAT have we in America in this twentieth century to do with the heritage of polyphonic art which has come to us from the masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, of whom Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina is generally considered to be the archetype?

The idea seems to prevail very largely that the music of this school is of a nebulous, enigmatical character, capable of being understood in this age only by the musical historian, and existing only in manuscripts covered with dust and cobwebs in the Sistine Chapel and historic Continental Cathedrals. Such, as we shall see later, is not the case.

True, the music of the classic polyphony is of a character which is indescribably ethereal, sublime, and in many ways infinitely transcendental to modern music as revealed even in its most rapturous effects. The absolute perfection of its science, its marvellous blending of voices of varied *timbre*, its kinship to the highest forms of renascent art, and its association with what was best, holiest, and noblest in the Church,—all these entitle it to the reverent admiration of the world and should inspire a serious interest in its study.

The original manner of writing the contrapuntal compositions would be incomprehensible to the average musician of these days. The unaccompanied melody of Plain Chant, which, being incapable of further melodic development, lent

itself to the treatment of the newly-discovered science of counterpoint, formed the basis for the *polyphonia* which was destined to achieve such wonders under the masterly manipulation of the composers of the Netherlands and Italy, and even of far-off, comparatively isolated England.

The output of the contrapuntists was exceedingly copious, and doubtless much of it never saw the light. Still, an enormous quantity of the composition of the time has been preserved and duly published. Were such compositions available, however, only in the many-clefed and otherwise complex scores of the masters, we might indeed relegate the hope of hearing in this country the music of Palestrina and the other composers of the polyphonic period, to the dim distance. But many musicians of fame have appreciated this grave difficulty, and are directing their praiseworthy skill to the deciphering of the labyrinthine scripts of the masters of counterpoint, and the reduction of the same to the modern methods of musical writing for voices to which we are now accustomed.

The well-known firm of Breitkopf and Haertel, Leipsic, have long since published, among much music of the polyphonic school, the complete works of Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso and Vittoria, from plates which are an excellent demonstration of the perfection of the engraver's art. This firm is now engaged in the publication of a still more lucid edition of contrapuntal music reduced to the common clefs of G and F and provided with phrasing marks and metronomic indications, under the editorship of the noted priest-musician, the Rev. Hermann Bäuerle of the Diocese of Rottenburg. Of this superb edition, there have already been published the following four-part Masses: *Aeterna Christi munera*, *Brevis*, *Dies sanctificatus*, *Emendemus*, *Jesu nostra redemptio*, *Iste Confessor*, *Lauda Sion*, *Sine nomine I (X toni)*, *Sine nomine II*

(*IV toni*), and *Veni sponsa Christi*; Palestrina; and *Simile est regnum coelorum* and *Ave Maris Stella*, Vittoria. Fifteen Motets by Vittoria have been published in this edition, and five others of his Masses and thirty Motets for various occasions by Palestrina are now in press.

Another new and equally excellent edition of classified music of the Roman, Venetian, and Netherlands schools is now in course of publication under the auspices of the Paris *Schola cantorum*, and several volumes have already been issued. It has the benefit of the highly able editorship of Charles Bordes, whose zeal in the Church music restoration has won for him special plaudits from the Holy See. The volumes of this *Répertoire des Chanteurs de Saint Gervais* which have been published up to this writing are most useful editions of practicable *polyphonia*. It is suggested in this connection, that there is no better medium by which pastors and choirmasters in America can keep pace with the significant growth of the reform movement in Church music than through *La Tribune de Saint Gervais*, published at 269 Rue Saint-Jacques, Paris. It is the monthly bulletin of the *Schola cantorum*, and Church music is treated therein according to its large and important scope. The American firm, Messrs. J. Fischer & Brother, New York, has shown alacrity and enterprise in conforming to the new requirements, and affords a reliable medium through which to deal with foreign publishers.

As a practical basis upon which to start a study of contrapuntal form, the following list of music in addition to compositions edited by the Rev. Hermann Bäuerle which have already been published, is suggested. Except where contrarily stated, it is confined to the *Saint Gervais* edition. The voice parts do not exceed five in any of the Masses or motets herein named and most of them are for four voices. Com-

positions of extreme difficulty are not mentioned, as we are yet a long way from the study of such ideals of classical style.

MASSES.—*Nos autem gloriari*, Soriano; *O Regem coeli*, and *Ascendo ad Patrem*, Palestrina; *O quam gloriosum est regnum* and *Quarti toni*, Vittoria; *Douce mémoire*, di Lasso.

MOTETS.—*Ave Christe immolate*, *Ave Maria*, and *Ave verum Corpus*, des Près; *Domine, convertere*, *Pauper sum ego*, and *Verbum caro panem verum*, di Lasso; *Ave maris stella*, *Christus factus est*, and *Pie Jesu*, Anerio; *Assumpta est Maria*, *Ave Regina*, *Salve Regina*, *Regina coeli*, and *Factus est repente*, Aichinger; *Ego sum pauper et dolens*, Croce; *Angeli archangeli*, *Filiae Jerusalem*, and *Sacerdos et Pontifex*, A. Gabrieli; *Cantate Domino*, Hasler; *Adoramus Te Christe*, *Exultate Deo*, *Ego sum panis vivus*, *O bone Jesu*, *O admirabile commercium*, and *Alma redemptoris Mater*, Palestrina; *O sacrum convivium*, Viadana; and *Domine, non sum dignus*, *Ecce sacerdos magnus*, *Duo seraphim clamabant*, *Jesu dulcis*, *O magnum mysterium*, *O vos omnes*, and *Gaudent in coelis*, Vittoria.

One of the Breitkopf & Haertel volumes of Palestrina's works contains thirty-two settings of the *Magnificat*, and among them there can be found some which in degree of moderate difficulty rank about as the selections above named. They are obtainable separately. Of a character fully commensurate with the music of the above list is that of William Byrd, of the contemporaneous school in England, and I would suggest the study of the following among his motets: *Vigilate*; *Respice, Domine, de sanctuario tuo*; *Laetentur coeli, et exultet terra*; and *Veni, Domine, noli tardare*. A typical edition of some of Byrd's compositions is issued by the (English) Antiquarian Society, and they can also be generally obtained through English publishers.

It is yet very early in the stage of Church music reform to aim at any speedy accomplishment in the line of the classic polyphony. The methods common to our modern singing in chorus are altogether different from the system required in the polyphonic rendition. The basic structure of the Modes in which the contrapuntal compositions are written is entirely different in the relations of their intervals to the final, from that of the diatonic scale plus *Si flat*, which we now use. We cannot approach the study of these compositions so well, if at all, by the application of modern principles turned historically backward, as by working forward from a thorough knowledge of the Modes of the Chant, and applying rules of counterpoint in diatonic progression. Dr. Proske wrote years ago with great truth: ¹ "The universal and indispensable basis for understanding and interpreting the contrapuntal scores of the old masters of Church music is the Gregorian Chant." The Holy Father recognizes the difficulties which the restoration of the polyphonic school involves, and he makes no requirements which need cause uneasiness among us. In the *Motu proprio*, he orders that it "must therefore be restored largely in ecclesiastical functions, especially in the more important basilicas, in cathedrals, and in the churches and chapels of seminaries and other ecclesiastical institutions in which the necessary means are usually not lacking." To sing the music of Palestrina and the other contrapuntal composers well means a great deal, and it assumes a high degree of proficiency on the part of the choir. Let us temper the zeal of our aspirations thereafter with prudence! Until our choirs have had long training in the Chant, until they have recognized and are imbued with its unworldly inspiration, let them be-

¹ Preface to *Musica Divina*.

ware of striking out beyond their depth into the sea of mediæval chorus composition. When they are well able so to do, let them neglect nothing in the way of *nuance*, dynamics, and careful adjustment of voices, which may reflect the traditional method of their production. In *a capella* singing, it is a foundation principle that every possible resource which careful expression can suggest, should be brought to bear; and this is assumed in its highest sense, as a prerequisite for the rendition of the music of this second classification. It is fortunate that we are directed to have boys for the acute voices of the *soprani* as required in the polyphonic compositions. They were written for male voices strictly, according to the then existing traditions of the Church, and they require the purity and beauty of scientifically cultivated boy's voices in the treble parts. The almost cloistral spirituality of this wonderful music would be completely lost, if the *soprano* parts were at the mercy of a feminine method of interpretation. An attempt to render the impersonal polyphonic music with female voices on the higher parts would be but another demonstration of the evident fact that women have absolutely no place in the liturgical functions.

The return to the classic polyphonic writings, as well as to the Chant, will mark, when we have reached the stage of spontaneous accordance to its genius, the quickening of religious zeal and true artistic emotion. In these two sources, the music of des Près, Palestrina, di Lasso, and the other artists of the period, had their birth. In the rarified religious and artistic atmosphere of the past three centuries which have followed the upheaval of religion in Europe, and which have witnessed orchestral development and the ascendancy of the opera, its existence has been a stifled one, and its revivification and reestablishment must depend upon a revival of the primary

conditions which caused it to arise. The consecrated purpose "to restore all things in Christ," which is the dominating standard of the reign of Pope Pius, is an earnest that the renewing stimulus which may be confidently expected in all that pertains to religion, will not be lacking in the restoration of the sublime worship music of this exalted school.

CHAPTER XVI.

MODERN MUSIC.

THE first questions in relation to this phase of our subject which will probably suggest themselves to the majority of those who are actively engaged in Church music are as follows: (1) According to what canons and criteria of selection may given compositions in modern style be adjudged admissible or inadmissible under the *Motu proprio*? (2) Does the new legislation imply an absolute farewell to our beloved Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, and even Gounod, whose religious mysticism of composition has caused him to be regarded among us as the exponent of an especially superior and religious style?

First of all, we must understand that modern music as such, and apart from the question of its adaptability to liturgical use, is not disparaged in the least. The Gregorian Chant, the Palestrina polyphony, and the modern orchestral style are co-equal amplifications of true musical art, each suited to its particular sphere. Such composers as those above named are most certainly among the mighty and venerable masters of the artistic, imperial school of music which the world is accustomed to in this our day and generation. Their compositions for the Church are wondrously beautiful from a musical and generally from a religious standpoint. Their availability under the liturgical rules is quite a different matter, however, and there is no question but that a justification of their use under the present authoritative amendments—except

in rare cases where gravity and consistency of style predominate—cannot be properly maintained. But, however out of balance with liturgical requirements they may be, their inherent beauty and artistic merit is not to be impugned. We Catholics need offer no apology for the profound and solemn emotions they have awakened in us in the past, nor for the sentiment which, by reason of long and pleasant association with them, moves us to defend them from the contumely of those who would presume to challenge their musical excellence.

The *Motu proprio* enunciates certain principles which must be borne in mind in our deliberations upon this phase of the subject. These principles propound a process of exclusion by which we are comparatively safe in indexing given compositions on an inhibited list. But the larger question, in which the very psychology of music is involved, and by which we can certainly say that such and such a composition is undoubtedly admissible, is left comparatively untouched. There are so many elementary principles pertaining to the very soul and mind of music, and such a complex maze of more or less unsystematized rules pertaining to the construction, classification, and interpretation of the elusive properties of sound, that careful study will be required for years to come, and discussion—in which the consensus of conclusion upon the subject shall be thoroughly evident—must have free play before there can be any rational understanding of the essence, much less the phenomena of the subject. It is only in a very general way, then, that principles can be deduced which can legitimately and beyond any question determine by what process of inclusion modern music may be recognized as generally suited to the liturgical rite. It is easy enough to say that music which does not possess characteristics forbidden by the *Motu proprio* is of course permitted. That much is a truism.

But let any half-dozen men who are well versed in music make the attempt at this budding stage of the music reform to agree upon a practical standard by which a favorable decision shall be applied to specified compositions which, for any cause, may be considered as open to question; they would soon find, particularly if they be of diverse nationalities, that guess-work will be very much in evidence, and that any such thing as a consistent unanimity on the subject is impossible. Therefore, beyond making certain suggestions which may serve as starting-points for the further excogitation of those interested, we cannot at this time go, and we therefore will not attempt to deal with absoluteness upon such a very problematical point.

Let us consider some suggestions as to how, according to the standards of the *Motu proprio*, we shall apply practical tests to the music customarily sung in our churches. After noting the recognition and favor which the Church has always bestowed upon the progress of the arts, so far as they have remained consistent with the liturgical laws, the following maxim is laid down: "Modern music is also admitted in the Church, since it, too, furnishes compositions of such excellence, sobriety, and gravity, that they are in no way unworthy of the liturgical functions." But this general admission of modern music is at once qualified as follows: "Still, since modern music has risen mainly to serve profane uses, greater care must be taken with regard to it, in order that the musical compositions of modern style which are admitted in the Church may contain nothing profane, be free from reminiscences of motifs adopted in the theatres, and be not fashioned even in their external forms after the manner of profane pieces." Then, by further process of expurgation, "the theatrical style, which was in the greatest vogue, especially in Italy, during the last century," is pronounced absolutely in-

admissible. There is no gainsaying the fact that by reason of these strict differentiations and correspondent rulings as to the length and structure of Masses, the treatment of the liturgical text, the insertion of solos and the use of orchestral instruments, the accustomed repertoire of the average American choir is completely overthrown, and the names of musical writers whose compositions have heretofore been familiar to Catholic congregations are very largely debarred. To be sure, it would be a false basis of judgment which would ascribe to the Masses of such giants in musical lore as those named above and others who rank in the galaxy with them, characteristics indicative of the profane and theatrical style which is forbidden by authority. They assuredly are neither flip-pant nor trivial in a single phrase. Wherein they assume a character which may be specified as dramatic or realistic, they are never so to the extent of profanity or staginess. But the overpowering magnitude of the musical treatment which in them is ordinarily applied to the words of the liturgy, the inordinate length of time required for the rendering of much of such composition by which the Holy Sacrifice is delayed, the writing of single musical numbers in separate movements, the omission (as in the case in a number of Haydn's Masses) of words of the text, and the necessity of an orchestra to their proper production, constitute final obstacles to their admissibility. Furthermore, it is hardly to be questioned that the general elaborateness, embellishment, and frequently garishness of their style are of a character unsuited to the solemnity of the Mass, and certainly, when gauged by the test of conformability or likeness to the "supreme model" of the Chant, they are generally ruled out. The *Motu proprio* refers to the matter thus: "It must be considered to be a very grave abuse when the liturgy in ecclesiastical functions is made to

appear secondary to, and in a manner at the service of the music, for the music is merely a part of the liturgy and its humble handmaid."

By applying ordinary principles of sense and discretion to examination of each of the hitherto familiar Masses, the choir-master will readily find that most of them come under the ban. For instance, he will find upon examining Haydn's *Third Mass*, that every number in it conflicts glaringly with the rules which have been established as a guarantee of propriety. Exactly the same results will be found on reading the *Second Mass* of the same composer. His *First* and his *Sixteenth Mass* contain some exquisite passages which, except for the impossibility of detachment from the whole, could be used under the present rules; but the places in the context of such passages renders them unavailable. Others of Haydn's Masses, Beethoven's *Mass in C*, and the Masses of Mozart are of a very similar character. Even the immortal *St. Cecilia Mass* of Gounod so departs from liturgical principles that the *Benedictus* only can be legitimately used at Mass, and even then we should be sure that the solo motif does not exceed the limits of the permitted "melodic projection," and that the Mass be not delayed. The safe way would be to sing the chorus part only. Gounod's *Sacrè Cœur* Mass contains sections which can be used, and the First and Second Masses *des Orphéonistes*, the *Jeanne d'Arc* and *Angeli Custodes* Masses can hardly be deemed other than legitimate under the *Motu proprio*. His *Convent Mass in C*, which is harmonized in four parts and supplemented by a solid and good *Credo* by Stollwerck is perfectly available throughout, if the choir refrains in this Mass, as in others by Gounod, from repeating the intonations of the celebrant. When it is deemed advisable for the choir of boys and men to pre-

pare a harmonized Mass in modern style, this one would be a good one to start with. However subdued it may seem to those of us who have loved his *Sacré Cœur* and *St. Cecilia* Masses in their entire and more extended scope, it nevertheless has the indefinable Gounod charm. Surely it is a satisfaction to feel that the beloved name of Charles Gounod remains even thus to us in an approved status as a Mass composer. The Masses of Cherubini, von Weber, Schubert, Hummel, etc., when subjected to an analysis similar to that suggested above, will be found generally ruled out, though there are occasionally found selections in compositions of this class, which would not seem to merit rejection.

Works of the writers of the Italian theatrical school, of whom Rossini may be considered a type, are of course entirely out of the question.

Beside the works by the preëminent masters of music whom we have just considered, we find our choir libraries overrun with compositions imitative of, but vastly inferior to, the school of music represented by them. The names of writers of florid Masses in "catchy" style, and of "Vespers No. I," or "Vespers No. II," made up of one, two, or three Psalms *di concerto* (which the *Motu proprio* says are "forever excluded and prohibited"), and a *Magnificat* similarly constructed, will suggest themselves at once to the initiated. There should be no further trifling with music of this class. It has but too frequently given a bad name to Catholic Church music. It is undoubtedly a fact that the religious works of the masters of the modern school are unable always to obtain a fair judgment from the *litterateur* and musical chronicler, because of their association in the programmes of our choirs with this kind of drivel, which every canon of educated taste should bar from further hearing. It is devoutly to be hoped that this

last sort of balderdash which has appeared in such plethora in the advertised programmes which, to our shame, have been given forth to the public, along with secular musical, sporting and racing news, may be heard no more in the Church.

The Masses of the masters of the modern orchestral school, while forbidden to be sung in church to any appreciable extent, can be preserved and studied as Sacred Oratorio by choral and concert societies.

Let us endeavor now to work out some considerations by which, though we cannot, as heretofore stated, be absolutely determinate beyond a certain point, we may find at hand available music composed in modern times in place of that which is now so unquestionably interdicted. We find, among the highest types, the great writers of the Cæcilia Society, who include such notable names as Haberl, Witt, Hanisch, Stehle, Mitterer and Singenberger, and whose excellent musical writings have become so justly celebrated and widely used. With full recognition of the superior accomplishments of this school of composition, it may be seriously questioned how far its use may be expected to predominate among those whose natal origin and traditions are other than German. This by no means insinuates that the characteristics of a very great deal of it would not appeal to many of other nationalities, if they could once be induced to study it to the point of thoroughly understanding it. We must simply recognize and frankly admit the invincible racial prejudices which arise from mutual non-comprehension. Any subject concerning the artistic, upon which the German, the Italian, the Britisher, and the Frenchman agree, has not yet been originated. Broadly speaking, music which, for the most part is distinctively German in type, is no more suited to Italian, French, or British taste than is music of the latter schools to the majority of

German and German-American people. This point is so apparent that it need not be enlarged upon. To so wield the temperaments and tastes of the inhabitants of our country, who represent "all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues," each animated by racial traditions peculiarly his own, that any point of mutual agreement upon a musical or artistic question can be reached; is a task indeed. The following passage from the *Motu proprio* can well be pondered in connection with this point. "While every nation is permitted to admit into its ecclesiastical compositions those special forms which may be said to constitute its native music, still these forms must be subordinated in such a manner to the general characteristics of sacred music that nobody of any nation may receive an impression other than good on hearing them." It certainly is unquestionable that the productions of the best Cæcilian composers are much more attractive than many people of other traditions seem to think, although it is a glory wherein the Cæcilia Society has a right to boast that its exponents have always sought the highest ideals of Christian art, and not attempting ever to appeal to the superficial taste, have worked on a higher plan than to produce merely attractive results. The claim of Cæcilian music to an exalted position among recognized art forms is not open to question, and a closer acquaintance with it on the part of those who may be unfamiliar with it, will prove to them the worthiness and nobility of its style. The further establishment of the Cæcilia Society will go a long way toward the realization of the ideals set forth in the *Motu proprio*.

There are some very good Masses by recent English composers which may be obtained through Messrs. Burns & Oates, 28 Orchard Street, London, W., and pastors will find it very much to their advantage to examine some of them with a

view of making a selection from them. The choirmaster can subject them to the tests laid down by the Holy See, and in many cases he will find no grounds for rejection. The firm of Messrs. Cary & Co., Oxford Circus Avenue, 231 Oxford Street, W., London, is issuing music which conforms to the authoritative requirements, written by Mr. R. R. Terry, Organist of Westminster Cathedral, and such other prominent English composers of recent times as Forrester, Westlake, Storer and Mgr. Crookall. The Liturgical Music Co., 171 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass., is publishing music which will be found most useful to well-trained choirs of boys and men by Casali, Brosig, Kretchmer, Wilkens and other musicians. Messrs. Fischer & Brother are also publishing some good Masses by both American and foreign composers, and their "Catalogue of approved Church Music" with additions made from time to time, contains much correct and available composition. Some compositions of the *maestro* of the Papal Choir, Don Lorenzo Perosi, will be found therein. While we prefer not to draw distinctions between the musical merits of Catholic composers who are now living and writing, we may be permitted to suggest that it is but reasonable to expect that Perosi, as the natural and most able exponent of the Holy Father's will in matters pertaining to Church music, should therefore interpret it in his musical compositions with clearness. His writings, therefore, should be well studied.

In endeavoring to make a selection of suitable motets in modern style, the choirmaster should apply principles of textual and musical criticism akin to those suggested for his selection of Masses. Whenever he can find music conformable to the present legislation, which has been composed by the familiar masters who are now ruled almost completely out of court, such, for instance, as the exquisite settings of *Ave*

verum Corpus by Mozart and Gounod, let him use it by all means. Motets are allowed after the *Offertorium* and *Benedictus* at High Mass, if there is time to insert them without delaying the action of the Mass. Motets and hymns can also be sung between Vespers and Benediction, or before the *Tantum ergo* at Benediction, and in these last cases, which are extra-liturgical, they may be sung either in Latin or in the vernacular.

The gist of sensible conclusion, so far as the use of modern music in the Church is concerned, is that, on broad lines, it must be submitted to a period of reconstruction; that is to say, availing ourselves of the stores we already possess, eliminating what has been interdicted, and conforming our contemporaneous composition to liturgical rules,—the modern school, as years pass and experience increases, will assume a reconstructed, cohesive, and definite form. We have many Catholic composers of to-day who represent advanced learning and wide musical culture, and whose place both in the musical world and among men of letters is recognized by all. They all know how they must write, or at least what they must avoid, if their music is to be sung in Church. With such leaders as Perosi in Rome, Bordes and Bellenot in Paris, Tozer and Terry in London, with the Cæcilia Society and the Solesmes School of Plain Chant spreading and flourishing, and with the excellent Catholic composers in our country, who are glad to lay their talent at the feet of the Holy Father, a reconstructed school of modern music will be reared which shall be the pride of religion and another exemplification of the Church's patronage of the fine arts.

It must not be forgotten, however, that the development of modern music is yet, in most of its phases, a secondary matter in the Church music restoration. Our attention and

energy must be claimed primarily by the Gregorian Chant. When attainments of proficiency have been achieved in that paramount regard, the time will be ripe for developing the resources of modern musical art.

CHAPTER XVII.

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.

WHY should the people sing?" asks the Rev. Alfred Young, Paulist, in the preface to the *Catholic Hymnal*. "The reason will be found," he writes, "in the reply which must be made to the question: Why does the Church direct and oblige the faithful to be assembled congregationally for divine worship? The answer is, in general, that they should pray *together*. But what special kind of prayer can they and should they pray *together*, which would be a common prayer in which all ought to join? Unquestionably the Prayer of Praise. No matter whether it be Holy Mass, Vespers, or a devotional meeting, the first and chief purpose of a religious assembly is the expression, both by voice and ceremonial, of Divine Praise. Whatever kind of prayer the people may make in church, as individuals, on their own account, and as called forth by their own peculiar necessities or singular spiritual relation with God, one thing is sure: the purpose of their being assembled together, and the one which takes precedence of all other purposes and privileges, is that they unite in praising God with a common ceremonial and a common utterance. The praise of all the people offered to God by a representative body of the worshipping Church, gathered together in the name and by the authority of Christ, is the divine idea of public worship intended to be realized by the Catholic Church; and therefore, if the people do not unite as one body in their ceremonial acts

and in their words of worship, that idea is frustrated in a greater or less degree."

Non-Catholics have appreciated the many advantages of common, *public* prayer, and in their rituals of worship, congregational singing holds an eminent place. In great cathedral churches, and in small country meeting-houses, alike, the art of singing in one voice the praises of the most High has been assiduously developed. It has come to be so prominent a part of the non-Catholic services, that some Catholics look upon it as a distinctively Protestant form of worship. Some among us have forgotten that in retaining this practice, our friends outside the fold have been cherishing and preserving an old Catholic tradition—a rich inheritance which has come down from Apostolic times, but which through our continued neglect and disuse, has passed from our hands.

But we have been told to claim it again as our own, and to summon it once more to its proper place at our services. "Special efforts are to be made," Pope Pius X commands, "to restore the use of Gregorian Chant by the people, so that the faithful may again take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as was the case in ancient times."¹

That the congregation originally participated as a body in the public services by chanting Psalms, Hymns, and Sacred Anthems, requires no further proof than a glance at the history of the ecclesiastical ceremonies and music of the first centuries of the Christian era. "The earliest testimony that can be called definite," says Professor Dickinson, "is contained in the celebrated letter of the younger Pliny from Bithynia to the Emperor Trajan, in the year 112, in which the Christians are described as coming together before daylight and singing 'hymns alternately (*invicem*) to Christ.'"

¹ *Motu proprio*, § 2 no. 3.

“So familiar were the people,” writes Cardinal Gibbons,¹ “with the popular melodies of the church that according to St. Jerome, ‘they who went into the fields might hear the ploughman at his alleluias, the mower at his hymns, and the vine-dresser singing David’s Psalms.’ ”

St. Augustine tells us in his *Confessions* (Bk. IX), that he was intensely stirred upon hearing the people sing in Milan: “How I wept in hearing Thy hymns and canticles, when the sweet sound of the music of Thy Church filled my soul! As the music flowed into my ears, the tide of devotion swelled high within me, and the tears ran down, and there was gladness in those tears.”

Although the development of ritualism was necessarily accompanied by a lessening of the people’s share in the liturgical singing, yet until a late date, certain portions of it were reserved to them. The officiating priests sang; the choir of levites sang; the people sang; all the worshipers gave expression in sacred song to the religious emotions of their souls.

And Pope Pius X wishes the Catholics of this century to sing; he wishes them to join the choir (the *chorus in choro*) in chanting those beautiful hymns and prayers in which the liturgy of the Church abounds. In the Advent season when the Church prays in song that “the earth may bud forth the Saviour, and the clouds rain down the Just One,” our Holy Father wants *all* the people to join in the prayer. At all seasons and feasts of the ecclesiastical year he desires the faithful to meet together in the sympathy and devotion of congregational hymnody. They must unite in the *Gloria* of Christmas, the *Miserere* of Lent, the *Alleluias* of Easter. They must no longer be passive spectators at a religious cere-

¹ *Ambassador of Christ*, p. 352.

mony, or auditors at a sacred concert; they must participate personally and actively, in the solemnities of public worship.

But how is this going to be accomplished?

While it might be utopian to hope just at present for a speedy resuscitation of all the old traditions connected with it, yet it is reasonable enough to hope that congregational singing will soon attain to a respectable popularity among us. For it is in the interests of the people, and they will welcome and earnestly second any efforts made toward introducing and perfecting it in their parish churches. There are few persons who do not enjoy singing in a chorus, and there are fewer still who can resist the inspiration of a congregational hymn, for two instincts—correlated and deepseated in human nature—are aroused and stimulated—the religious instinct, and the musical instinct.

Cardinal Gibbons thus describes the congregational music at Cologne: "Several years ago, on a Sunday morning, I entered the Cathedral of Cologne during a low Mass, and took a seat in the body of the church. The vast edifice was filled with a devout congregation, representing every station in life. I observed the officer and the private soldier, the well-dressed gentleman and the plainly clad laborer, ladies and domestics, young and old, priests and laymen, mingled together, and singing in the vernacular, the popular sacred hymns of the fatherland. They seemed so absorbed in their devotional chant, as to be utterly oblivious of everything around them. I said to myself: what a noble profession of faith is this!"

What has been accomplished in the Cologne Cathedral, and in thousands of other churches abroad, can easily be accomplished right here in our own churches, if the priests will only manifest sufficient enthusiasm, and go about inaugurating this exercise of devotion in the right way.

Here are some details which should be observed in the process of introducing congregational singing :

(1) Announce well, several weeks before the day upon which you have decided to begin, that this traditional practice is soon to be restored in your church. Tell the people what it means, and what the Church thinks about it. Get them keenly interested before you make any attempt at introducing it.

(2) Get a leader with a strong voice and a good ear; he need not necessarily be a professional musician. Place him in a prominent position in the church, where he can be seen and heard distinctly by everybody.

The organist should not attempt to teach the congregation alone.

The leader should sing a new hymn line by line, phrase by phrase, and the congregation should repeat each line and phrase, until the whole piece is mastered.

(3) Don't attempt music that is difficult, or lacking in melody. The people will not warm to it.

(4) Have a sufficient number of hymn-cards for the whole congregation. People will not keep up interest if two or three have to read from one card.

(5) The organist should play the hymns *low* enough to encourage the *basses* and *altos* of the congregation to sing. The men will soon cease to sing if they are obliged to strain for high notes, well out of their range.

(6) From the beginning, avoid dragging. This is a common fault in congregational singing and is destructive of the "swing" and buoyancy which are the life of a congregational hymn.

(7) Encourage the people, and urge them to greater efforts. Particularly urge the men to sing; they are inclined to be timid at first.

(8) Be active in increasing the repertoire.

(9) Hold a few private rehearsals in the choir-hall, for a selected number of the parishioners, and during a service have these persons well distributed through the church.

As to the extent to which this congregational singing may be carried, it should be said that the more the people unite in the Chants of the choir, the nearer shall we approach the ideal pointed out in the *Motu proprio*, i. e., the customs of the early Church in this respect.

It is suggested that the Benediction service be reserved to the congregation, and such parts of other services as might easily be learned; e. g., the Responses at High Mass and Vespers; the Processional and Recessional Hymns; the Litanies of the Saints, the Holy Name, and Loretto; the Magnificat at Vespers; etc.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MODERN HYMNODY.

THE science of hymnology has held high rank in the Catholic Church since the days of the Apostles and we accordingly find saints and doctors of all ages applying themselves to the musical versification of the themes of our holy religion. The Latin hymnody of the Divine Office as contained in the Roman Breviary of to-day constitutes a syllabus of classical utterance worthy of immortal pens and angelic tongues. The shapeliness of its sequence is evident in every phrase, and woven together into the fabric of its poetry are the essential fibre of accurate theological expression and the luxuriant adornment of unrestrained praise. Although we are now concerned with the extra-liturgical singing of metrical hymns in the vernacular tongue rather than the hymnody of the Breviary, we purposely commence this chapter with reference to the latter, because it is necessary in forming a judgment in matters relating to modern hymnody to remember that the liturgical hymn is the true model of what a perfect hymn is and therefore of what a perfect hymn should be. The more nearly according to this excellent type the modern hymn in the vulgar tongue is constructed, the nearer to perfection it may be said to be,—likewise, the greater the contrast between them, the less perfect may the modern hymn be adjudged. Vernacular hymns of the best class are, as it were, the next-of-kin to the imperishable classics of the Liturgy, and it is to be hoped that

the extension of male choirs will further the custom, so praiseworthy and so completely in accordance with the mind of the Church, as that of singing such vernacular hymns whenever their use may be legitimate and conducive to edification.

An adequate consideration of the points justly within the scope of our reflections requires a specification of certain standards by which productions of modern hymnody in the best poetical form and most finished musical dress may be found available. It is not meant by this that the hymn should frustrate one of its principal purposes by being "above the heads of the congregation" and suited only to the ability of a skilled choir, but that the hymn used in the public worship of God should not exhibit marks of carelessness, much less illiteracy in poetry, nor betray the tyro in music. The writers of deservedly famous Catholic hymns in the vulgar tongue have always aimed at the highest possible artistic perfection. Not less than by a traceable likeness to the hymn of the Liturgy may the excellence of a modern hymn be also gauged by the perfection of its poetry and the corresponding worthiness of its music. Where there is found united in a given hymn these three guarantees of superior quality, the test of its merit is final,—if they, or any one of them, are lacking, it is devoid of worth.

How far are these criteria found to be satisfactorily vindicated in hymns written by composers of to-day? How many of our living hymnists have conscientiously laid down for themselves true models of propriety in this regard? Is it not a fact that in the common practice of many of our churches, the choice hymns by true poets and true musicians, which so plenteously enrich the literature of the Catholic Church, remain unnoticed in the hymn-books, while we have served up to us rhymes which have nothing but the piety of their ori-

ginators to recommend them, set to tunes which are reminiscent of ballad, school song, and anything and everything but a true church style? Had we not an exuberance of surpassingly superior hymnody within the pages of our many hymnals, these censures of what is doubtless intended as an offering to religion would never be written, but the habitual setting aside of such exquisite hymns as are mentioned toward the close of this chapter and hundreds of others like them, in favor of much of the kind of thing which we are obliged to suffer in League and Sodality meetings, is a miscarriage of practice which can not be too severely characterized.

It is essential that we should estimate truly, first the exact relation of hymnody to the subjects included in the musical regeneration with which Pope Pius X has awakened the world, and secondly, to what extent our customary practice in this regard must be accordingly submitted to remedy. To that end, our first practical duty is to determine where we have hitherto stood in this regard, and we are thus forced to the admission that notwithstanding the copious hymnology of countless able writers ready at our hands, we have too generally preferred the husks of inferior verse and melody. So strong are our feelings upon this subject, that even more important than the speedy return to proper styles of hymnody in universal use, do we regard the necessity of expurgating from any use whatever such nourishers of bad taste and distractions from worship as many hymns which are constantly heard among us. It is far better that a hymn should never be sung than that we should be obliged to endure the blatancy of "Form your ranks, O all ye Leaguers of the Heart Divine," or the inanities of "Mother, tell me, what have I to do?" or the extravagances of "Thou for whom I've long been sighing." A thousand pities it is that this

sort of effusions hold sway and crowd out hymns of able composers which would bring joy to the saints.

To be sure, this state of affairs is very easily to be accounted for. The idea to which the rendering of true Church music has been largely subverted in recent times has been the display of this one and that one in the performance of an irrelevant and overbalanced musical accompaniment to the Mass. Few of our more noted and active Church musicians in America seem to have had it in them to apply the sublime principles of art to the compositions of hymn tunes in classic metres, as men like the composer of the incomparable music to the *Dream of Gerontius* and the *Apostles* and others of his splendid ilk, are doing to-day, for many of the most renowned composers abroad do not count the composition of hymn melodies beneath their genius. But even had the promptings of our best American composers' artistic natures brought forth any accomplishment worth speaking of in this line, their satisfaction at thus serving art for art's sake would have been their sole encouragement. The régime of the mixed choir of male and female voices which is now declared illegal, included no provision for the singing of the modern hymns of the Church to any noticeable extent. The products of the composer's genius in this line would have had but little chance of a general hearing outside of gatherings of the faithful in devotional societies and confraternities and the anomalous "Low Mass with music" which obtains in some places. They would have remained unknown to the "audiences" of quasi-Catholic, Protestant, and Hebrew floaters who have filled some of our city churches at Vespers on Sundays, and who, much as we may dislike to confess it, have by their patronage and applause dictated the standards by which many of our composers have seen fit to compose. In lieu, therefore, of the

more able writers who have spent their energies in such styles of composition as have elicited the greater encouragement, others of lesser ability and more cramped scope, whose resources either as poets or composers would soon have been drained dry upon their essaying more elaborate attempts, have turned their attention toward the writing of hymns and tunes. Every community in the country has its poet, or more probably, its poetess, and between the rhymesters and the setters of rhymes to airs in lackadaisical six-eight *tempo* and to other abnormalities of composition, we need not wonder that so many hymnals are filled with very poor stuff.

Another class of modern hymns, more sympathetically to be condoned wherein it exhibits shortcomings, consists of many which have been written in convents and schools for young people, and which, having met with more or less success in a somewhat contracted sphere, have unwisely been considered suited for a more public purpose and published for general use. In many well-known hymns of this class, there is either a juvenility or femininity of ring, a far-fetchedness of metaphor, an elementariness which amounts to a crudity of rhyme, a scantiness of harmonic treatment, a simplified one-note or otherwise rudimentary bass, an eccentricity of *tempo*, or a tendency to treat the entire subject after the manner of a song rather than a hymn, which produce most unsatisfactory results.

The remedy for this wrong condition of affairs lies with the pastors of churches. They had far better assume the responsibility of selecting the hymns to be sung than to leave their selection to the judgment of the average choirmaster, for frequently the subject of hymnody has never aroused either his attention or interest. In many churches, there are assistant organists who play the organ for a junior choir at Sunday-school and Sodality meetings, whose principal repertoire con-

sists of hymns. Generally, such an assistant organist should work under the oversight of the pastor or one of his assistants or the choirmaster. The natural desire to accomplish something out of the ordinary is apt to tempt the junior choir and organist beyond the limits which safeguard the integrity of a good hymn, and into the territory of the bizarre and worthless.

We have often heard and expressed comments upon the great contrast between the riches of hymnody which we possess and the shabby specimens which we so commonly hear, and although it is not an agreeable part of our duty to dwell upon what is so reprehensible in our ordinary practice, it is a very necessary one, for we would be writing at cross-purposes upon this subject if we failed to make it clear that we exclude from our definition of hymnody much that is ordinarily so classified, and include only such composition as conforms to the three tests hereinbefore mentioned.

Although there is much cause for criticism in the neglect to which true hymnody has been subjected in favor of the inferior substitute, there certainly has been improvement in recent years along proper lines. The late Rev. Alfred Young, C. S. P., of the Paulist Church, New York, and the Rev. J. B. Young, S. J., now and for years past at the Jesuit Church of St. Francis Xavier in the same city, have been the two prominent deliverers of Catholic hymnody in this country from utter unworthiness. They have promulgated instruction representative of the best thought and highest ideals, and wherever their influence has reached, they have established a conception of the subject which is unspeakably superior to that which had generally prevailed. There is now a growing familiarity among us with the beautiful Catholic hymns which are so dearly beloved and cherished in England, and to the

science of writing which, men of the highest literary and musical attainments have applied their willing labors. The scholarship in this direction which has produced such a collection as *Catholic Hymns*, by A. Edmonds Tozer, Mus. Doc., is of the highest grade. Dr. Tozer is now preparing a hymnal which will soon be published in this country by the Fischers.

The custom obtains in some places of singing hymns by Protestant writers at devotional services and after funeral rites. Such a custom cannot be defended on any ground. "Nearer, my God, to Thee," "Jesus, Lover of my soul," "Rock of Ages," "Abide with me," and others of the kind, however they may be admired as religious hymns and poems, have no legitimate place in Catholic worship, for evident reasons. Even the immortal "Lead, kindly light," which is so universally loved, can not be classified as a Catholic hymn, as it was written by Dr. Newman during the days of his Protestant ministry, and we have his own authority for the statement that the sentiments therein had no reference whatever to the inestimable grace of conversion to the Faith which was granted to him many years later. This being the case, his beautiful hymn is a Protestant hymn, pure and simple, and we would do wrong to make an exception of it for the sake of sentiment.

The entrance of the procession of boys and men from the choir sacristy to their places in the chancel for Solemn Mass and Divine Office, and their retirement at the close of the functions, will afford most fitting opportunities for the singing of some of our best Catholic hymns. Most beautiful effects of shading, color and phrasing can be secured in them. The gradual approach of the swelling voices as they draw near and enter the church, and the slow dying of their voices to a distant *pianissimo* as they return to the choir sacristy, are impressive and edifying. The preparation of the minds

and hearts of the congregation for a devout hearing of Mass, which can be realized by the use of such hymns as Cardinal Newman's "Praise to the Holiest in the height," Matthew Bridges' "Crown Him with many crowns," Robert Campbell's "Word of God to earth descending," and Father Faber's "My God! how wonderful Thou art," when thus sung, is beyond estimate. The inspiring effect of Caswall's "When morning gilds the skies," as the singers advance to the choir to sing High Mass; or the calm and devotional effect as, at nightfall, the voices which have been lifted in the praises of the Church recede in the distance, impressively singing the traditional "Ave Maria! Thou Virgin and Mother!" until far away, the last words, "Sinless and beautiful! Star of the Sea!" breathe the final strains of the day's worship,—such effects are so thrilling and quickening to cultured and religious impulses as to amount actually to means of grace.

In closing our reflections upon this branch of our subject and at the same time, of the various other problems which constitute the burden of this *Manual*, we earnestly express the hope that our suggestions may be found useful to those who are anxious to do the will of the Church in regard to the music and ceremonies of her worship. We could know no greater satisfaction than to feel that we had in some measure contributed toward an effective realization in this country of the reforms instituted by our Holy Father, "so that," as in his admonitory words, "the authority of the Church, which herself has repeatedly proposed them, and now inculcates them, may not fall into contempt."

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

SACRED MUSIC.

PIUS X, POPE.

“MOTU PROPRIO.”

AMONG the cares of the pastoral office, not only of this Supreme Chair, which we, though unworthy, occupy through the inscrutable disposition of Providence, but of every local church, a leading one is without question that of maintaining and promoting the decorum of the House of God in which the august mysteries of religion are celebrated, and where the Christian people assemble to receive the grace of the Sacraments, to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the altar, to adore the most august Sacrament of the Lord's Body, and to unite in the common prayer of the Church in the public and solemn liturgical services. Nothing should have place, therefore, in the temple calculated to disturb or even merely to diminish the piety and devotion of the faithful; nothing that may give reasonable cause for indignation or scandal; nothing, above all, which directly offends the decorum and the sanctity of the sacred functions and is thus unworthy of the house of prayer and of the Majesty of God. We do not touch separately on the abuses in this matter which may arise. To-day our attention is directed to one of the most common of them, one of the most difficult to eradicate, one whose existence is some-

times to be deplored in places where everything else is deserving of the highest praise—the beauty and sumptuousness of the temple, the splendor and the accurate performance of the ceremonies, the attendance of the clergy, the gravity and piety of the officiating ministers. Such is the abuse affecting sacred chant and music. And indeed, whether it is owing to the very nature of this art, fluctuating and variable as it is in itself, or to the succeeding changes in tastes and habits with the course of time, or to the fatal influence exercised on sacred art by profane and theatrical art, or to the pleasure that music directly produces, and that is not always easily contained within the right limits, or finally to the many prejudices on the matter, so lightly introduced and so tenaciously maintained even among responsible and pious persons, the fact remains that there is a tendency to deviate from the right rule, prescribed by the end for which art is admitted to the service of the public worship and which is set forth very clearly in the ecclesiastical canons, in the ordinances of the General and Provincial Councils, in the prescriptions which have at various times emanated from the Sacred Roman Congregations, and from our predecessors the Sovereign Pontiffs.

It is gratifying to us to be able to acknowledge with real satisfaction the great good that has been effected in this respect during the last decade in this our fostering city of Rome, and in many churches of our country, but in a more especial way among some nations in which eminent men, full of zeal for the worship of God, have, with the approval of the Holy See and under the direction of the Bishops, united in encouraging societies and restored sacred music to the fullest honor in all their churches and chapels. Still the good work that has been done is very far indeed from being common to all, and when we consult our own personal experience and take into

account the great number of complaints that have reached us during the short time that has elapsed since it pleased the Lord to elevate our humility to the supreme summit of the Roman Pontificate, we consider it our first duty, without further delay, to raise our voice at once in reproof and condemnation of all that is seen to be out of harmony with the right rule above indicated, in the functions of public worship and in the performance of the ecclesiastical offices. Filled as we are with a most ardent desire to see the true Christian spirit flourish in every respect and be preserved by all the faithful, we deem it necessary to provide before aught else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for no other object than that of acquiring this spirit from its foremost and indispensable fount, which is the active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church. And it is vain to hope that the blessing of heaven will descend abundantly upon us, when our homage to the Most High, instead of ascending in the odor of sweetness, puts into the hand of the Lord the scourges wherewith of old the Divine Redeemer drove the unworthy profaners from the Temple.

Hence, in order that no one in future may be able to plead in excuse that he did not clearly understand his duty, and in order that all vagueness may be eliminated from the interpretation of matters which have already been commanded, we have deemed it expedient to point out briefly the principles regulating sacred music in the functions of public worship, and to gather together in a general survey the principal prescriptions of the Church against the more common abuses in this subject. We do therefore publish, *motu proprio* and with certain knowledge, our present *Instruction*, to which, as to a *juridical code of sacred music* (*quasi a codice giuridice della musica sacra*), we

will, with the fulness of our Apostolic Authority, that the force of law be given, and we do by our present handwriting impose its scrupulous observance on all.

INSTRUCTION ON SACRED MUSIC.

I.—GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

1. Sacred Music, being a complementary part of the solemn liturgy, participates in the general scope of the liturgy, which is the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful. It contributes to the decorum and splendor of the ecclesiastical ceremonies, and since its principal office is to clothe with suitable melody the liturgical text proposed for the understanding of the faithful, its proper aim is to add greater efficacy to the text, in order that through it the faithful may be the more easily moved to devotion and better disposed for the reception of the fruits of grace belonging to the celebration of the most holy mysteries.

2. Sacred music should consequently possess, in the highest degree, the qualities proper to the liturgy, and precisely *sanctity* and *goodness of form*, from which its other character of *universality* spontaneously springs.

It must be *holy*, and must, therefore, exclude all profanity not only in itself, but in the manner in which it is presented by those who execute it.

It must be true art, for otherwise it will be impossible for it to exercise on the minds of those who listen to it that efficacy which the Church aims at obtaining in admitting into her liturgy the art of musical sounds.

But it must, at the same time, be universal in the sense that, while every nation is permitted to admit into its ecclesiastical compositions those special forms which may be said to con-

stitute its native music, still these forms must be subordinated in such a manner to the general characteristics of sacred music that nobody of any nation may receive an impression other than good on hearing them.

II.—THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF SACRED MUSIC.

3. These qualities are to be found, in the highest degree, in the Gregorian Chant, which is, consequently, the chant proper to the Roman Church, the only chant she has inherited from the ancient fathers, which she has jealously guarded for centuries in her liturgical codices, which she prescribes exclusively for some parts of the liturgy, and which the most recent studies have so happily restored to their integrity and purity.

On these grounds the Gregorian Chant has always been regarded as the supreme model for sacred music, so that it is quite proper to lay down the following rule: *the more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration, and savor to the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy is it of the temple.*

The ancient traditional Gregorian Chant must, therefore, be largely restored to the function of public worship, and everybody must take for certain that an ecclesiastical function loses nothing of its solemnity when it is accompanied by no other music but this.

Special efforts are to be made to restore the use of the Gregorian Chant by the people, so that the faithful may again take a more active part in ecclesiastical offices, as was the case in ancient times.

4. The above-mentioned qualities are also possessed in an excellent degree by the classic polyphony, especially of the Roman School, which reached its greatest perfection in the

fifteenth century, owing to the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina, and continued subsequently to produce compositions of excellent quality from the liturgical and musical standpoint. The classic polyphony agrees admirably with Gregorian Chant, the supreme model of all sacred music, and hence it has been found worthy of a place side by side with the Gregorian Chant in the more solemn functions of the Church, such as those of the Pontifical Chapel. This, too, must, therefore, be restored largely in ecclesiastical functions, especially in the more important basilicas, in cathedrals, and in the churches and chapels of seminaries and other ecclesiastical institutions in which the necessary means are not lacking.

5. The Church has always recognized and favored the progress of the arts, admitting to the service of the cult everything good and beautiful discovered by genius in the course of ages —always, however, with due regard to the liturgical laws. Consequently modern music is also admitted in the Church, since it, too, furnishes compositions of such excellence, sobriety, and gravity, that they are in no way unworthy of the liturgical functions.

Since, however, modern music has risen mainly to serve profane uses, greater care must be taken with regard to it, in order that the musical compositions of modern style which are admitted in the Church may contain nothing profane, be free from reminiscences of motifs adopted in the theatres, and be not fashioned even in their external forms after the manner of profane pieces.

6. Among the different kinds of modern music, that which appears less suitable for accompanying the functions of public worship is the theatrical style, which was in its greatest vogue, especially in Italy, during the last century. This of its very nature is diametrically opposed to the Gregorian Chant and the

classic polyphony, and, therefore, to the most important law of good music. Besides the intrinsic structure, the rhythm, and what is known as the *conventionalism* of this style, adapt themselves but poorly to the requirements of true liturgical music.

III.—THE LITURGICAL TEXT.

7. The language proper to the Roman Church is Latin. Hence it is forbidden to sing anything whatever in the vernacular in solemn liturgical functions—much more to sing in the vernacular the variable or common parts of the Mass and Office.

8. As the texts that may be rendered in music, and the order in which they are to be rendered, are determined for every liturgical function, it is not lawful to confuse this order or to change the prescribed texts for others selected at will, or to omit them either entirely or even in part, except when the rubrics allow that some versicles of the text be supplied with the organ, while these versicles are simply recited in choir. It is permissible, however, according to the custom of the Roman Church, to sing a motet to the Blessed Sacrament after the *Benedictus* in a Solemn Mass. It is also permitted, after the Offertory prescribed for the Mass has been sung, to execute during the time that remains a brief motet to words approved by the Church.

9. The liturgical text must be sung as it is in the books, without alteration or inversion of the words, without undue repetition, without breaking syllables, and always in a manner intelligible to the faithful who listen.

IV.—EXTERNAL FORM OF THE SACRED COMPOSITIONS.

10. The different parts of the Mass and the Office must retain, even musically, that particular concept and form which

ecclesiastical tradition has assigned to them, and which is admirably expressed in the Gregorian Chant. Different, therefore, must be the method of composing an *Introit*, a *Gradual*, an *antiphon*, a *psalm*, a *hymn*, a *Gloria in excelsis*.

II. In particular the following rules are to be observed :

(a) The *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, etc., of the Mass must preserve the unity of composition proper to their text. It is not lawful, therefore, to compose them in separate pieces, in such a way that each of such pieces may form a complete composition in itself, and be capable of being detached from the rest, and substituted by another.

(b) In the Office of Vespers it should be the rule to follow the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*, which prescribes the Gregorian Chant for the psalmody, and permits figured music for the versicles of the *Gloria Patri* and the hymn.

It will, nevertheless, be lawful on the greater feast days to alternate the Gregorian Chant of the choir with the so-called *falsibordoni*, or with verses similarly composed in a proper manner.

It may be also allowed sometimes to render the single psalms in their entirety in music, provided the form proper to psalmody be preserved in such compositions; that is to say provided the singers seem to be psalmodizing among themselves, either with new motifs, or with those taken from the Gregorian Chant, or based upon it.

The psalms known as *di concerto* are, therefore, forever excluded and prohibited.

(c) In the hymns of the Church the traditional form of the hymn is preserved. It is not lawful, therefore, to compose, for instance, a *Tantum ergo* in such wise that the first strophe presents a *romanza*, a *cavatina*, an *adagio*, and the *Genitori* an *allegro*.

(d) The antiphons of the Vespers must be, as a rule, rendered with the Gregorian melody proper to each. Should they, however, in some special case be sung in figured music, they must never have either the form of a concert melody or the fulness of a motet, or a *cantata*.

V.—THE SINGERS.

12. With the exception of the melodies proper to the celebrant at the altar and to the ministers, which must be always sung only in Gregorian Chant, and without the accompaniment of the organ, all the rest of the liturgical chant belongs to the choir of levites, and, therefore, singers in church, even when they are laymen, are really taking the place of the ecclesiastical choir. Hence, the music rendered by them must, at least for the greater part, retain the character of choral music.

By this it is not to be understood that solos are entirely excluded. But solo singing should never predominate in such a way as to have the greater part of the liturgical chant executed in that manner; rather should it have the character of simple suggestion, or a melodic projection (*spunto*), and be strictly bound up with the rest of the choral composition.

13. On the same principle it follows that singers in church have a real liturgical office, and that therefore women, as being incapable of exercising such office, cannot be admitted to form part of the choir, or of the musical chapel. Whenever, then, it is desired to employ the high voices of sopranos and contraltos, these parts must be taken by boys, according to the most ancient usage of the Church.

14. Finally, only those are to be admitted to form part of the musical chapel of a church who are men of known piety and probity of life; and these should, by their modest and devout bearing during the liturgical functions, show that they

are worthy of the holy office they exercise. It will also be fitting that singers while singing in church wear the ecclesiastical habit and surplice, and that they be hidden behind gratings when the choir is excessively open to the public gaze.

VI.—ORGAN AND INSTRUMENTS.

15. Although the music proper to the Church is purely vocal music, music with the accompaniment of the organ is also permitted. In some special cases, within due limits and propriety, other instruments may be allowed, but never without the special leave of the Ordinary, according to the prescriptions of the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*.

16. As the chant should always have the principal place, the organ or instruments should merely sustain and never oppress it.

17. It is not permitted to have the chant preceded by long preludes, or to interrupt it with intermezzo pieces.

18. The sound of the organ as an accompaniment to the chant in preludes, and the like, must be not only governed by the special nature of the instrument, but must participate in all the qualities proper to sacred music as above enumerated.

19. The employment of the piano is forbidden in church, as is also that of loud-sounding or lighter instruments, such as drums, cymbals, bells, and the like.

20. It is strictly forbidden to have bands play in church, and only in a special case and with the consent of the Ordinary will it be permissible to admit a number of wind instruments, limited, well selected, and proportioned to the size of the place—provided the composition and the accompaniment to be executed be written in a grave and suitable style, and similar in all respects to that proper to the organ.

21. In processions outside the church the Ordinary may give

permission for a band, provided no profane pieces are executed. It would be desirable in such cases that the band confine itself to accompanying some spiritual canticle sung in Latin or in the vernacular by the singers and the pious associations which take part in the procession.

VII.—THE LENGTH OF THE LITURGICAL CHANT.

22. It is not lawful to keep the priest at the altar waiting on account of the chant or the music for a length of time not allowed by the liturgy. According to the ecclesiastical prescriptions the *Sanctus* of the Mass should be over before the Elevation, and therefore the priest must here have regard to the singers. The *Gloria* and *Credo* ought, according to the Gregorian tradition, to be relatively short.

23. In general it must be considered to be a very grave abuse when the liturgy in ecclesiastical functions is made to appear secondary to and in a manner at the service of the music, for the music is merely a part of the liturgy and its humble handmaid.

VIII.—PRINCIPAL MEANS.

24. For the exact execution of what has been herein laid down, the Bishops, if they have not already done so, are to institute in their dioceses a special Commission composed of persons really competent in sacred music, and to this Commission let them intrust in the manner they find most suitable the task of watching over the music executed in their churches. Nor are they to see merely that the music is good in itself, but also that it is adapted to the powers of the singers and be always well executed.

25. In seminaries of clerics and in ecclesiastical institutions let the above-mentioned traditional Gregorian Chant be culti-

vated by all with diligence and love, according to the Tridentine prescriptions, and let the superiors be liberal of encouragement and praise toward their young subjects. In like manner let a *Schola Cantorum* be established, whenever possible, among the clerics for the execution of sacred polyphony and of good liturgical music.

26. In the ordinary lessons of Liturgy, Morals, Canon Law, given to the students of theology, let care be taken to touch on those points which regard more directly the principles and laws of sacred music, and let an attempt be made to complete the doctrine with some particular instruction in the æsthetic side of the sacred art, so that the clerics may not leave the seminary unfamiliar with all those notions, necessary as they are for complete ecclesiastical culture.

27. Let care be taken to restore, at least in the principal churches, the ancient *Scholæ Cantorum*, as has been done with excellent fruit in a great many places. It is not difficult for a zealous clergy to institute such *Scholæ* even in the minor and country churches—nay, in them they will find a very easy means for gathering around them both the children and the adults, to their own profit and the edification of the people.

28. Let efforts be made to support and promote in the best way possible the higher schools of sacred music where these already exist, and to help in founding them where they do not. It is of the utmost importance that the Church herself provide for the instruction of its masters, organists, and singers, according to the true principles of sacred art.

XI.—CONCLUSION.

29. Finally, it is recommended to choir-masters, singers, members of the clergy, superiors of seminaries, ecclesiastical institutions, and religious communities, parish priests and rec-

tors of churches, canons of collegiate churches and cathedrals, and, above all, to the diocesan Ordinaries, to favor with all zeal these prudent reforms, long desired and demanded with united voice by all; so that the authority of the Church, which herself has repeatedly proposed them, and now inculcates them, may not fall into contempt.

Given from our Apostolic Palace at the Vatican, on the day of the Virgin and Martyr, St. Cecilia, November 22, 1903, in the first year of our Pontificate.

PIUS X, POPE.

The *Credo* must be sung *throughout* (S. R. C., Sept. 7, 1861, n. 3108, ad XV). If time permit, it is allowed after the singing of the Offertory, between the *Benedictus* and the *Pater Noster* and during the distribution of Holy Communion, to sing *Motets* (*Caer. Episc.*, Lib. I, cap. 28, § 9), suitable to the service, but they must be (1) in Latin, and (2) taken from Sacred Scripture, the Breviary or hymns and prayers approved by the Church. (S. R. C., July 7, 1894, n. 3830, VII, p. 1, art. 7.)

It is unrubrical to repeat the words *Gloria in excelsis Deo* and *Credo in unum Deum* after they have been sung by the celebrant.

The Introit cannot be begun before the celebrant has reached the altar (S. R. C., April 14, 1753, n. 2424, ad VII); the *Benedictus* must be sung after the Elevation (S. R. C., May 22, 1894, n. 3827, III). Appeltern, *Manuale Lit.*, Vol. I, p. 322, *Nota*, holds that this is prescribed only for Pontifical Masses; the Communion cannot be begun until the celebrant has consumed the Precious Blood (*Caer. Episc.*, Lib. II, cap. 8, § 78), and if Holy Communion is distributed, it is sung during the ablutions (Miss. Rom., *Ritus Celebr.*, Tit. X, 9). During the *Elevation* all singing is strictly forbidden. (S. R. C., May 22, 1894, n. 3827, III.)

III.—MISSA DE REQUIE.

The celebrant sings the orations in *tono simplici feriali*; the *Preface* and *Pater Noster*, in *cantu feriali*.

The choir must sing *throughout* all the parts that properly belong to the Mass: *Kyrie*, Gradual, Tract, Sequence *Dies irae*,¹ Offertory, *Sanctus*, *Agnus Dei* and the Communion

¹ The S. R. C., Aug. 12, 1854, n. 3029 ad Dubium XII, concerning the *Dies irae*, answered "*aliquas strophas illius cantores praetermittere posse*,"

(S. R. C., Sept. 11, 1847, n. 2959, ad XXIII; May 9, 1857, n. 3051, ad I). The same is to be observed at the Absolution of the Dead with regard to the *Libera me, Domine*, which must not be begun before the celebrant has taken his place at the bier or *tumulus* (S. R. C., Sept. 7, 1861, n. 3108, ad IV).

Note.—In all sacred functions when the choir sings alternately with the organ, the following ought to be sung by the choir:

1. The *first* verse of Canticles and Hymns;
2. Strophes or verses during which the ceremonies prescribe that the ministers kneel;
3. The *Gloria Patri*, even when the preceding verse was sung by the choir;
4. The *last* strophe of Hymns (*Caer. Episc.*, Lib. I, cap 28, § 6). The *Gloria Patri* at the end of the Psalms should be sung more slowly and in a more solemn manner.

IV.—THE ORGAN.

The use of the organ is prohibited at Mass and Vespers when *de tempore*—

1. On the Sundays of Advent, except on the third Sunday (*Gaudete*), or when a feast *Dupl. I classis* falls on the second or fourth Sunday;
2. On the Sundays of Lent, except on the fourth Sunday (*Laetare*), or when a feast *Dupl. I classis* falls on the second or third Sunday;
3. On the ferials of these penitential seasons, except on festivals,¹ in *solemn votive* Masses, on Holy Thursday to the

but as *Dubium XII* and its answer are expunged from the latest edition of the Decrees (Romae, Ex Typogr. Polygl. S. C. de P. F., 1898-1901) we conclude that it must be sung *throughout*.

¹ During the Forty Hour's Devotion on the Sundays of Advent (except

end of the *Gloria in Excelsis*, and on Holy Saturday after the intonation of the *Gloria in Excelsis* by the celebrant to the end of Mass.

The prohibition of the playing of the organ whilst the celebrant is singing the Preface and *Pater Noster* is implied by the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* (Lib. II, cap. 28, § 9), inasmuch as these parts of the Mass are not enumerated among those at which the use of the organ is permitted. The S. R. C. (Jan. 27, 1899, n. 4009), when asked, answered: "*Obstat Caeremoniale Episcoporum quod servandum est.*"

During the Elevation the quiet and devotional (*graviori et dulciori sono*) playing of the organ is permitted. (*Caer. Episc.*, Lib. I, cap. 28, § 9.) Where the custom prevails, the music of the organ may be substituted for the *Deo Gratias* after the *Ite, Missa est*. (S. R. C., Sept. 11, 1847, n. 2951, ad V.) The organ may be played from the moment the celebrant leaves the sacristy until the chant of the Introit begins; when the celebrant is occupied at the altar and there is nothing to be sung by the choir; from the *Ite, Missa est* until the celebrant has returned to the sacristy.¹ Whether figured music or the Plain Chant be used (*Ephem. Liturg.*, Vol. X, p. 275), the organ may be played as accompaniment whilst the choir sings during Requiem Masses, but it must be silent when the singing ceases (*Caer. Episc.*, Lib. I, cap. 28, § 13).

With the exception of the occasions noted in the paragraphs above, the organ may be used at all other liturgical services and sacred functions. During the Blessing with the Blessed Sacrament the organ may be played *suavi ac gravi sonitu* (Gardellini, *Instr. Clement.*, § xxxi, n. 12).

Gaudete) and of Lent (except *Laetare*) and on Ash Wednesday and the first three days of Holy Week the use of the organ is forbidden. S. R. C., June 2, 1883, n. 3576, ad XVI.

¹ *Auctores generatim.*

Note I.—“Figured organ music ought generally to be in accord with the grave, harmonious, and sustained character of that instrument. The instrumental accompaniment ought to support decorously and not drown the chant. In the preludes and interludes the organ, as well as the other instruments, ought always to preserve the sacred character corresponding to the sentiment of the function” (S. R. C., July 7, 1894, VII, *De Musica Sacra Ordinatio*, n. 3830, p. 1, art. VI).

Note II.—“It is forbidden to improvise *fantasias* upon the organ by any one who is not capable of doing it in a suitable manner—that is, in a way conformable not only to the rules of art but also calculated to inspire piety and recollectedness among the faithful.” (*Ibidem*, Art. XII.)

Note III.—The Church regards the Gregorian (plain) Chant as truly her own, which is accordingly the only one adopted in the liturgical books of which she approves (*Ibidem*, Art. II), although “With us it would be more difficult to render a Plain Chant Mass well than almost any figured chant. But a suggestion might be made, *apropos* of this: that wherever and whenever a choir is unable to produce properly a “grand” Mass, it should respect the fame of the composer, the real merits of his work, the feelings of the congregation, and especially the liturgical proprieties, by contenting itself with a simpler composition.”¹

V.—LANGUAGE.

In solemn strictly liturgical functions,² hymns in any other than the *Latin* language are forbidden. (*De Musica Sacra Ordinatio*, S. R. C., July 7, 1894, n. 3830, VII, p. 1, art. VII.)

¹ Rev. H. T. Henry, Litt. D., “The Recent Decree on Church Music,” *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, January, 1895, p. 107.

² Found in the Missal, Breviary and Roman Ritual.

These hymns must be taken from the Sacred Scriptures, from the Breviary, or be hymns and prayers otherwise bearing the approval of the Church. (*Ibidem.*)

In a *Missa solemnis* or *cantata*, hymns in honor of the Saint or Mystery whose feast is being celebrated in the *vernacular* are not allowed (S. R. C., Jan. 31, 1896, n. 3880). To sing hymns in the *vernacular* during the distribution of Holy Communion in a *Missa solemnis* or *cantata* is prohibited. (S. R. C., Jan. 14, 1898, n. 3975, ad V, 1.)

During Benediction, from the *beginning* of the *Tantum ergo* to the *end of the blessing*, nothing in the *vernacular* may be inserted (S. R. C., March 23, 1881, n. 3530, ad II), except the Divine Praises, "Blessed be God," which may be recited immediately after the oration *Deus qui nobis*, or after the blessing (S. R. C., March 11, 1871, n. 3237, ad I).¹

Before and after a *Missa solemnis* or *cantata*, during a *Missa privata*, before the Blessed Sacrament exposed, except from the *Tantum ergo* to the end of the Blessing and in all other sacred services,¹ hymns and prayers in the *vernacular* are allowed, except the *Te Deum* and other strictly liturgical prayers (S. R. C., Febr. 27, 1882, n. 3537, ad III). Both hymns and prayers ought to inspire piety and be approved compositions.

Note.—Only those Litanies which have been approved by the Apostolic See may be sung or recited in churches or public oratories, whether the services be *public* (S. R. C., March 6, 1894, n. 3820 ad I) or *private* (S. R. C., June 20, 1896, n. 3916). These Litanies are "Omnium Sanctorum," "SS. Nominis Jesu," "SS. Cordis Jesu," "Lauretanae B. M. V."

¹ Triduum, novenas, devotions in honor of the Sacred Heart, etc.

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